# THE EPITOME OF Mans Duty.

BEING

A Diſcourſe upon *Mic.* 6. 8. where the Hypocritical people are briefly directed how to pleaſe God.

*Qui in vitiis ſibi placent, non credent nobis, etiamſi Solem manibus geſtemus.* Lactant.

*LONDON*,

Printed by *R. W.* for *Francis Tyton*, and are to be ſold at the three Daggers in *Fleetſtreet* near the inward Temple Gate, 1660.

THE

# EPITOME

OF

# Mans Duty.

BEING

A Discourse upon Mic. 6. 8.

wherein the Hypocritical

people are briefly directed

how to please God.

LONDON,

Printed by R. N. for Francis Tyton, and are
to be sold at the three Daggers in
Fleetstreet over the inward Temple
Gate, 1660.

# The Epitome of mans Duty.

MIC. 6. 8.

*He hath ſhewed thee O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

THAT there are Laws of God engraven upon the tables of our hearts, both the light of nature, and the holy Scriptures plainly tell us. Whenſoever we raze out or blot any of theſe Laws, we prick our conſciences, and draw blood of our own ſouls; and we become traytors alſo to Gods Majeſty, whoſe image and ſuperſcription we vilely deface; and we know very well that we have incurred his high diſpleaſure. Now it hath been the enquiry of all

Men would willingly pleaſe God and themſelves too.

men how to heal theſe wounds and gaſhes in the conſcience, and how to pacifie the wrath of God, and obtain reconciliation with him. Yet ſuch a love they have to their old traiterous practiſes which they are loth to leave, that they would willingly find a way to pleaſe God, and to pleaſe themſelves both together. They will ſpare no coſt to be at peace with God, ſo it may not coſt them the life of their ſins, and they may ſtill be at peace with them. This is too manifeſt in the ſtory of *Heathens*, *Jews*, and *Chriſtians*.

Apparent from the Heathens.

The *Heathens* knowing that they had offended their Gods, but having no mind to be perfect friends with them, invented all the wayes they could think of to get their good will, and obtain a grant of them to ſin and not be puniſhed, a licenſe to follow their own deſires without any diſturbance. This was the original of the multitude of Gods, of uncouth ceremonies, horrid myſteries, Panick terrors and affrightments: for they ſtood in a terrible dread that the Gods intended

ded ſome miſchief to them which ey knew they deſerved. The *Athe-ans* (for example) worſhipped ma-y Gods, who they thought might do em either good or harm: and leaſt ere ſhould be any that they per-ormed no devotion unto, and there-ore might owe them a ſpite, they ade an Altar to an *unknown God*. Or s we may gather from *Diogenes Laer-ius*, there being a great mortality mong them, and they obtaining no eaſe by all their prayers and ſacrifices o the *Gods* of their own countrey, they magined that it came from ſome un-nown hand, and ſo worſhipped that God whoſoever he was, that he might e reconciled to them.

Juſt ſuch likewiſe was the humour of the *Jews*, though better taught by God. They could contentedly beſtow ny thing upon him, ſo that they might but have their own wills; And when heir ſacrifices were coſtly and expen-ive, they hoped God would be well atisfied; and account himſelf no oler by their ſins which brought him ſo many fat ſervices. And if theſe

From the Jews.

would not give him full content, rather then he ſhould not be ſatisfied, and rather then their ſins ſhould be ſacrificed, they would offer their own children unto him. They ask him if he would have their *firſt born* (as it was the manner of ſome heathens to ſacrifice men and women upon their Altars to their Gods) If he deſired, the fatteſt and faireſt child in the flock ſhould be made an oblation to him, or if he would have all their eſtates evaporated in ſacrifices; all their riches ſmoak in his holy fires. It is the art of the *ſuperſtitious* man to flatter God and fawn upon him; to bribe him (as it were) with a rich and gaudy worſhip at ſome ſeaſons, that he may have liberty at other times not to worſhip him nor ſerve him as he ought. And this being a timerous diſpoſition of ſoul, it makes the man very ſcrupulous how to pleaſe God, & very laviſh in his expences, out of fear that he will otherwiſe be very troubleſome to him if he be not pleaſed.

And from the Chriſtians.

There is ſtill the ſame diſeaſe in the ſoul of moſt that are called *Chriſtians*. They

They know that they have ſinned, and that God is very angry; and they know that he is very powerfull and able to tear them in pieces: that he is a conſuming fire, & can devour them in a moment; And this fear makes them ſigh and weep, knock their breaſts, and make a mournfull noiſe; faſt and pray, run from Church to Church, to offer him ſacrifice: hear Gods word and read it, or do any other thing but only do the will of God according to what they hear and read to be their duty. For they do not ſee any ſuch *goodneſs* in God that ſhould attract their love, and make delight in his life, and accord with his will; but they are only amazed at his *greatneſs*, and tremble to think of the evil that he can do them. They will give him (as it were) the *fruit of their body*, they will pine and ſtarve their corps with faſting, if the doing that pennance will ſatisfie for their ſurfetting and drunkenneſs, or for their greedy, ravenous, and devouring covetouſneſs. They will ſpare no *hallowed breath*, if their *prayers* may

but blow away the infection of their oaths, lyes, corrupt communication that comes out of their mouths. If he will have a *drink offering* of their very tears, they will not grutch it, so be it that they may drown the tears of the oppressed, or wash off the staines of cruelty and unmercifulness. They will mourn and lament; they will cry and houl upon their beds; they will sigh and groan; they will walk heavily and sadly; they will shut themselves up from company; they will make large confessions of their offences; I cannot tell what it is that they will not do; but all is to intreat the Lord not to be angry with them for their rebellions: and if ever they commit the like again, they promise to make him as good an amends as they do now, and resolve to fast and mourn and bewail the fault; so that he shall not say, they did nothing to please him.

The reason of mens endeavour to please him without leaving their sins.

And the reason of all this is, because men love their sins well themselves; and think that God can love them also if he will, and that he need not be

ſo offended and diſtaſted unleſs he leaſe. They hope therefore that ey may intreat him to be more kind hen to take away their beloved luſts om their embraces, ſeeing it is not *nature* but only his *imperious will* s they imagine) that ſets him ſo ainſt them. And hence it is that ey earneſtly begg his pardon for hat his paſt: and for to incline him condeſcend to their deſires of not ing angry with their ſins, they are illing and ready alſo otherwiſe to atifie him, and to give him ſome-hing that may pleaſe him as well as eir forſaking of them. And at laſt y long uſe and practice they grow to his conceit, that they cannot imagine what God would have more then that ey ſhould confeſs their ſins and be orry for them. And they live as if ey could not deviſe what ſhould be more pleaſing to God, nor what he ſhould require further of mortal creatures: Whereas my text tells you plainly that it is the corruption of their wills rather then the weakneſs of their underſtanding, that makes them

them judge thus perversly, For it is plain enough what is acceptable unto God, *The Lord hath shewn thee O man what is good; and what else is it but to do justly?* &c. Thou needest not ask so many questions, (as they do, *ver.* 6, 7.) as if thou knewest not what God would have, nor what thou shouldst do to him more then thou dost, unless thou shouldst offer thy children to him, or all the beasts in thy pastures, *&c.* For a little inquiry will acquaint thee that God is very well pleased if thou wilt be just, merciful, and humble.

The sense of the words from their dependance on the foregoing.

That seems to be the very true sense and meaning of those words foregoing, *Wherewithall shall I come before the Lord*, &c. *ver.* 6, 7. For this chapter contains the *pleading of God* with his people: in the *first* verse of which he calls to the Prophet as his *Attorney* to manage his *plea* which he puts in against them. And the Prophet in the *second* verse calls for silence whiles he pleads in open court in his behalf. After which in *ver.* 3, 4, 5. he opens the case, and shews how

how guilty they were even from their own *confession*, that God had never given them any cause to be weary of his service; but rather that he had done them all the good that they could desire. And he leads their memories back as far as *Ægypt*, and the wilderness, where his mercies were wonderfull to them, bidding them *testifie against him*, and put in their plea also, if they had any thing to say in justification of their defection from him.

Now in those words, *ver* 6, 7. the Prophet seems to bring in the people interrupting of him in this complaint against them; saying for themselves in a grumbling manner, *What would you have us do?* what is it that you would have us give to God? Do we not offer him sacrifices, and bow our faces before his dwelling place? What would he have more then this? What better provision shall we make for him at his house? They speak like men that knew not how to please God, and as if he was such an one that no body knew what would content

tent him. Will he be pleaſed (ſay they) with a thouſand of rams? What, would he have all the ſheep in our flocks driven to his Altars? Would he have all the oyle in the land run in a ſtream to his houſe? or would he have our *firſt born* children now ſacrificed, which formerly we might exchange for ſome thing elſe? Would he have them in *kind* now offered up unto him? or would he have all the *fruit of our body*, the blood of all our children one and other ſprinkled before him to expiate for our ſins? No, what need all this language (ſaith the Prophet here in my text) why, do you make your ſelves ſo ſtrange to what I ſay? As though you could not tell without all theſe aſperſions caſt upon God what he would have you to do? He hath ſhewed thee O man, who talk'ſt in this ſort, what is good; And tell me what thou thinkeſt in thy own conſcience it is that the Lord requires of thee. Is it any thing elſe but to *do juſtly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with God?* Their ſilence and not anſwering to the Queſtion argues that

that it is unanſwerable; and therefore the Prophet goes on in the reſt of the chapter without any interruption from them, to lay open their ſins and puniſhments. It is not ſuch a difficult matter to pleaſe God as men make it; they know well enough what it is that he requires, if they have any mind to do it: and it is no ſuch ſtrange thing that they ſhould wonder he requires it at their hands.

In the words you may obſerve theſe ſix things.

Six obſervations from the words.

1. *That there is ſome duty to be paid to God by every one of us.*

2. *That it is eaſie to know this duty.*

3. *That God exacts of man nothing in his duty which is unequal or unjuſt, and therefore it is eaſie alſo to do it.*

4. *That a mans own conſcience will be witneſs againſt him if he do not perform this duty which God requires.*

5. *Juſtice, mercy and humble deportment before God are the ſumm of it.*

6. *Theſe things were alwayes more valued by God then ſacrifices, and other the moſt coſtly ſervices.*

All

All these lie plainly before your eyes, as you may soon discern in the text: or they will all manifestly appear to him that will seriously attend these following considerations which I will offer to his thoughts upon every one of them.

The proof of the first, from four things.

FOR the truth of the *first*, *That there is something owing by every one of us unto God*, I need not search all the *divine writings* to make out *Gods title* to mans duty; here are *evidences* enough for it within the compass of the text.

1. He is our *Lord*.

*First* he is our *Lord* [ What doth the *Lord* require of thee? ] and that by a title *Paramount* to all others. He gave us our being; and it is one of the *Regalia* of the crown of heaven, that all the *Subjects* of that kingdom are perfect *creatures*. We are all his vassals, and can no more be absolved from *fealty* and *homage* to him, then we can cease to be when we are. All the tenures, you know, among us were held by some *services*: and that of *pure Villenage* made a man most at the

le will of the Lord: now such is that hich we owe to God, but more pure d absolute then any other can posbly be. For our persons are tyed d bound to him, and not only our rvices; and we are not bound by ur own consent only, but we are *ervi nati*, born his servants; yea ore then so, we are *Servi creati* (a ile peculiar to him) *created servants*, ho owe their whole selves to him.

To deny therefore all obedience nto God, is to say, *we are our own, who LORD over us?* It is the highest iece of pride and insolency, an unparalleld rebellion against our natural overaign; a crime never to be parboned but by his infinite clemency; nd our unfeigned subjection to him long as we live.

2. We are *men* [ he hath shewed ee O *Man* what is good ] and as we e reasonable creatures, (1) We are indowed with more excellent powers of obeying God then other creatures: we are tyed to him in the most noble ervices, and fitted for the most honourable employments. (2) And being

2. We are *men*.

being reasonable creatures, we likewise have a sense above all others of our obligations to the supream *Lord* of the world; and our own consciences give us the lye, if we say that we are free to do what we will. We know very well that when we took a being from him, we took an *oath of faith and service to him.* There is ὅρκος ἐνσπωμένος τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι, as an Heathen himself could say, an *oath* inclosed and consubstantiated with mankind; an *oath* of allegiance included in our very being; a *Sacrament* which we took to God in our mothers womb when we had first leave to become men. Our very reason and conscience is that ἐπαγγελία ἀνθρώπου (in *Arrians* Phrase) that *promise* and *engagement* whereby we swear to God before we can speak, as soon as a soul is breathed into us. He that breaks this sacred oath or promise, doth unman himself as much as he can, and becomes unreasonable. And (3.) as *reasonable* likewise, a man can soon tell himself, that since he requires service of persons and things

*Hierocles.*

*below*

*below* him: he is much more bound in service to the *Most High* who is the Creator of us all.

3. God *requires* something of us, which he would never do if it was not his due: He is not so *unjust* as to make demands where he hath no right: nor so *needy* as to beg that which is none of his own: nor so *unkind* as to follow us with continuall *arrests* if we were his neighbours only, and not his tenants and debtors: nor so *unwise* as to maintain *officers* and servants where he hath nothing to receive. These are the words of the Prophet of God to men: now why should God send his messengers and Ministers, and call upon men so earnestly, but that there are some services incumbent upon them, of which they ought to be highly sensible? What King makes proclamation where he expects no subjection? What Lord issues out commands, and sends out his servants, where he hath no tenants that hold of him? It would be in vain to make such loud cryes to men, if God expected nothing, but that men

3. God makes demands.

shouldpleaſe themſelves, and do to him as they thought good. And it is too late to ask *quo jure*, by what right God *requires* our obedience: for I have already mentioned a title that comprehends all in it.

4. The worſt of men confeſs his right.

4. The worſt of men confeſs his right. They that will not love him, will flatter him; they that will not give him all, will give him ſome: and they that have been negligent, ſeek to make him ſatisfaction. The Jews to whom the Prophet here ſpeaks, that would not do all his will, yet offer him large ſumms to buy off the puniſhment for their faults. As they who are bound by their tenures to perſonal ſervice in the wars, would many times rather ſend their ſervant in their ſtead: ſo would theſe men gladly give God content by ſacrificing of their beaſts, when they had no mind to offer up themſelves. And all the wayes whereby the poor heathen ſtudy to make him reparation for their wrongs, and atone him to them, are plain confeſſions of this truth, that we owe ſomething to him.

In a matter ſo clear, I will not hold a candle to the Sun, but *Firſt* I ſhall rather wonder that there ſhould be any ſuch perſons in the world that live like bruites; as if God required nothing of them, but had made them to fill their bellies, and their purſes, and had given them leave not to be men. Sons of *Belial* they are (as the antient Scripture calls them) men under no yoke or government, unleſs it be the tyranny of their own luſts and paſſions, which domineer over them. Men that hate inſtruction and ſcorn reproof, as if we did them wrong when we tell them God *requires* that they ſhould be better. Men that lift up the noſe, like the *wild Aſs* in the wilderneſs which ſnuffs up the wind at her pleaſure, and ſay, who ſhall command them? I wiſh there were no ſuch Monſters in the world, that ſhake off the government of God, and ſay of Chriſt, *this man ſhall not reign over us*: that take it ill to be touched in the tender intereſt of their ſins: that think (it is plain) neither God nor man can require more of them then they will give them.

Application, againſt the profeſſedly prophane.

Take heed that all this be not true in your lives, if not in the temper of your spirits. Remember seriously this fundamentall truth which you all know well enough already, *That you are not at liberty*: that there are some indispensable duties lie upon you: that you are tyed to God in the most sacred bonds: and that it must be your greatest care to see them well discharged.

And against pretended Saints.

And secondly, if this be true, let the *Libertines* of this Age *look to it*, who think that all duty smells of baseness and servitude (for by that name they have learnt to call all our services) and that Christ came to free us from obedience to God himself. And let us *look to them* also: for if God must expect nothing from them, then what presumption is it for us poor mortals to imagine that they must be just or faithful, or any thing else to us. And therefore you may observe, that at the same time that men began to think there was no obligation lay upon them of duty to God, they began to imagine that all their Lord-

lords

rds also were usurpers, and that they d no rights but what the corruption ancient times had given them.

But Christ did not make us the less en, by making us to become Christians. He hath in his title the name our *Lord*. *Duty* and *true grace* are no such difference as silly people agine. Our obligations are not minished, but our strength and ower is increased; the service is not tered, but *love* mixt with *justice* akes it more easie. We are not discharged from our work, but our reward is swelled to an unmeasurable proportion to it.

But I pass by this, because I hope ere are none that hear me, who set od and Christ at odds, and rob him his *creature* under a pretence of aking him a *Christian*.

THE *second* truth, *viz. That it is easie for men to know their duty*, is clear om two passages in the text. 1. The ord hath *shewed* it to them. He hath monstrated it, & made it very plain:

The second obse v prov

so that if *a Law* do not bind till it be promulgated, that injures not Gods title at all; for he hath *shewn* and proclaimed his mind. 2. It is so *shewn*, that men cannot but see it and take notice of it, as the *manner* of words by way of Question doth clearly intimate, *What doth the Lord require of thee?* As if he should have said; thou knowest very well, I need not tell it thee, It is sufficient only to put thee in mind of what thou art well acquainted with, even *to do justly, to love mercy*, &c. And indeed it is so plain, that God *shews* it more wayes then one.

1. God shews man his duty by his Conscience.

1. He *shews* it in our own consciences by the light of reason. That the Question supposes, and the Apostle expresly saith, Rom. 1.19. *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them.* Rom. 2.15. Which *shew* the work of the Law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, *&c.* (1) Mans soul doth not come out of Gods hand like a *sheet* of *white paper*, in which there is nothing writ, or printed; but it is as a *book* impressed

preſſed with many ſacred letters and divine characters. And (2) this book is not ſhut and claſpt, but it ſtands open to every ones ſearch. Nor (3) is Gods mind writ in ſome corner of the book, and wrapt up in leavs of darkneſs, but it ſhews it ſelf, and the letters are ſo great, that they will be read Nor (4) Is the ſence of this writing hard to be underſtood, but we call them *Common notions*, *firſt principles* which muſt be eaſie, and perſpicuous at the firſt ſight. Nor (5) need we go to the learned for their Comments upon them; or as *Tertullian* ſpeaks, we need not appeal to a ſoul that hath been formed in the Schools, bred in a Library, and fed with Academical notions, but *ſimplex & rudis, & impolita, & idiotica, illa ipſa de compito, de trivio, de textrino*, the moſt ſimple and rude, the moſt impoliſhed and illiterate ſoul, the verieſt highway ſoul; the ſoul that is bred in the ſhop or in the ſtreet, will teſtifie to theſe things, as well as that which is brought up in a Study, or learned retirements. Nor (6) is this book

*De teſt. Animæ, cap.* 1.

so blotted by our fall into the dirt, but that the great lines of our duty are fair and legible. Just as we see the Sun in a cloud casts forth a light whereby we discern in what part of the heavens it is; or as a pearl will shine though it lie on a dunghil; so will these *golden letters* shine and glister in mens souls, in an heap of rubbish: and this light will break forth through a veil of darkness. And (7) where there are any *lacunæ*, any gaps or breaches in a particular soul, by comparing all the *Coppies*, and consulting with one anothers reasons, we should soon find the true sense. Yea (8) more then this, it is not in the power of any of you to raze out these characters. They are not at your liberty to expunge or alter. For they are not so much *scriptæ* as *natæ*, written as born: we did not put them into us, but we find them in us. Though I might here cry out as *Tertullian* in another case, *O anima naturaliter Christiana*! O soul, who naturally art a Christian! yet let us look further and consider,

2. That

2. That in the Bible God *ſhews* our duty more clearly by the light of revelation. Here we are informed ſo exactly both what God is, and what man is: that he muſt be blind that doth not ſee that it is Gods word, and that mans obedience is due unto it. The very ſtile wherein it ſpeaks is, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, a form of ſpeech not to be found in other books. The contents of it about our duty are ſo clear and plain, that we may ſay with *Solomon*, *Prov.* 6. 23. תורה אור *lex eſt lux, the Law is light.* Or as it is ſaid in the viſion of *Habakkuk*, which God bid him write and make plain upon tables, (*chap.* 2. 2.) he that runs may read it. And again theſe plain things are ſo agreeable to the connate principles of our mind, and the natural ſenſe that we have of goodneſs, that *he hath put his laws into our hearts*; and *we need not ſay one to another* (as if it was a ſtrange thing) *know the Lord, for all of us may know him from the greateſt to the leaſt.* In ſhort, this word is compared to a glaſs which ſhews unto us all our own deformities,

2. By his word in the Scriptures.

formities, and repreſents unto us likewiſe the face and image of God, whereby we ſhould dreſs and compoſe our ſelves to be beloved of him.

3. By his Miniſters.

3. He *ſhews* us our duty by his Miniſters in the light of preaching. *Cry aloud, ſpare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſions*, Iſa. 58. 1. *Wilt thou judge the bloody City? yet thou ſhalt ſhew her all her abominations*, Ezek. 22. 2. If there be any thing in this book, that is not ſo plain and clear: God hath ſet them to expound and unfold it. If any thing be dark, they are to manifeſt it. They open to men Gods word, and let them into the inwards and ſecrets of it. And by *manifeſtation* of the truth, they commend themſelves to every conſcience of man in the ſight of God, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* 4. 2. *i e.* men know in their conſciences that what we ſay in theſe matters, is the very truth of God.

4. By his Works.

4. The works of God in the world abundantly *ſhew* it by the light of providence. Thoſe *exemplary puniſhments* I mean upon notorious offenders.

which

which ſpeak the finger of God; and his *rewards* to the righteous, which have many times no leſs of God in them. By theſe God vindicates his authority, and ſhews that he is the ſupream Governour; and that theſe are his Laws from which we ought by no means as we love our ſelves to ſwerve, or ſtir a foot. And ſo God ſaith, the *wickedneſs of* Judah *was diſcovered*, *Ezek.* 16. 57. when he puniſhed her for her iniquity: It had often before been *diſcovered* by the preaching of the Prophets, but when that would not prevail, he laid it open in a more dreadfull manner by the voice of his judgements, which bid all men mind their duty better.

5. All the people and Church of God do *ſhew* it in the light of their lives. Their light ſhines before men; they *ſhew* forth the praiſes or the vertues of him that hath called them out of darkneſs into his marvelous light. Men cannot but ſee that there are many in the world, that run not with them into the ſame exceſs of riot, that pray continually, that make a conſcience

5. By the Church.

Math. 5. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

ence of every word they ſpeak; that are full of love and pitty; that are ready to do good; of a peaceable and meek diſpoſition, and ready to forgive, &c. Theſe *ſhew* to men what is good, and they have them continually before their eyes. It is well if it be not ſo plain, that they become an *eye-ſore* to them: if they do not ſhine ſo bright in contradiction to their lives, that they are offended at it. The Church of God is called the pillar and ground of truth, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. becauſe it doth hold forth the truth to men: and ſupport it in the world, even as a pillar doth a proclamation which is affixed to it, ſo that all that paſs by may read it. And this it doth not only by preaching and outward profeſſion, but by the ſincere practice of a multitude of profeſſors. So that it is as eaſie for men to know their duty, as to know what a Kings proclamation is, which is not only cryed, but likewiſe poſted up in the market-place, that all may read it.

Let us not then be ſo *dull* as to think on the one hand to plead *Ignorance.*

*nce*, or *weakneſs of parts*, or *inſufficiency of light* in excuſe, for neglect of ur duty: or ſo wild, as on the other nd to turn *Seekers* in Religion, as ough no body could yet find the ay to heaven. The Lord hath *ewed* thee O man, what thou haſt to ; and therefore thou ſhalt not be ble to pretend that thou wantedſt e means of knowledge, and hadſt body to inform thee in thy duty: nd he hath *ſhewn* it ſo long ago, that e world cannot be at this day to ek how to pleaſe God, as if no boy could tell what his mind was. To ſs by the former, let it be conſidered concerning the latter, that they e ſhrewdly to be ſuſpected to believe God, or elſe not to know what ey mean by the name, who are to ek what Religion to be of. For no an can be rationally perſwaded of e being of a God, and not be perſwaded that he governs the world: nd if he govern the world, it muſt be by Laws; And if thoſe Laws are certain, they are no better then one. And if they be made for all

We cannot then plead Ignorance, we need not be Seekers.

his

his ſubjects, they muſt be plain, becauſe many of them underſtand but little.

*It* is an eaſie thing to find what Gods will is, if we be but impreſſed with ſuch a ſenſe of our dependance on him as begets that reverence and fear of him, and that love and affection to him, which eaſily and naturally flows from the ſenſe of our dependance. Gods mind is laid before us, we need only open our eyes and look no further. The way is plain, though it be narrow; the gate is open, though it be ſtrait. You may eaſier find the way then walk in it, you may ſooner ſee the gate then enter in at it. It is to be feared that they who ſeek for ſome new way, find this too ſtrait and narrow which they have been in; and they would have a greater liberty to themſelves, then formerly their conſciences durſt let them take. And then the Devil may ſoon ſhew them the way wherein they ſhould walk, and by a new light diſcover to them the paths of darkneſs. But I dare ſay if any man have a mind to live godly,

to

to deny himself, to walk humbly with his God; he need not go to *seek* any further then this book. There he may behold so much to be practised, that if he will *seek* no further till he hath done that, I may warrant him from being of the number of any other *seekers* then those that *seek the Lord continually*, that they may walk in all his commandments blameless. They are *exceeding broad*, they are to have an influence into the whole life: so that if the doing of those be our end, we need seek for no more, for they will hold us at work all our dayes.

THE third observation is, *That Gods demands are not unequall*, or that he doth not exact of us any duty that is hard and rigorous. They are not *Draco*'s Laws, cruell and tyrannicall: nor the heavy yoke of *Moses*, grievous, and painfull; but the gracious commands of Jesus Christ, the Laws that God himself lived by when he was in the flesh: Cosin germans to those

The third observation proved.

those that rule in heaven. Two things in the text likewise speak this, beside that which is mainly intended.

*First* the Prophet calls it *Good* which the Lord shews to us. He requires nothing that is for our harm, or our reall damage, or which a man should refuse if he was left to himself, did he rightly understand. And secondly, the question likewise speaks it, *What doth the Lord require of thee?* As if he should have said, what great matter doth he look for? what canst thou except against it? is it any thing strange and uncouth, that was never before heard of? Did thy mind never give thee notice of it? Is it some monstrous task, that the mind of man could never conceive it, nor think of it? No.

1. God exacts not things impossible.

1. God requires nothing *impossible*, as is apparent from two things which the text suggests to our thoughts. 1. He doth not bid men offer their children to him, which perhaps they have not. He doth not bid them buy them (as the Heathen sometime were fain to do) for perhaps they are not able.

ble. He doth not exact of men (as he Prophet before ſaid ) *a thouſand vers of oyl*, which a whole Town or Countrey cannot afford: But as *Moſes* ith, *The commandment is not hid from bee; neither is afar off: It is not in aven that thou ſhouldſt ſay, who all go up to heaven, and bring it to us, hat we may hear it and do it? Neither it beyond the ſea, that thou ſhouldſt y, who ſhall go over the ſea for us and ring it unto us that we may hear it and it? But the word is very nigh unto bee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that hou maiſt do it.* Deut. 30. 11, 12, 13, 14. e doth not bid us all be Schollars, nd underſtand all the books of na-ure: He bids us not to climb up to eaven, and follow the chariot of the un, and track the paths wherein the oon walks, and number all the hea-enly bodies, things which all mens arts and employments will not reach: ut he ſaith plainly, *do juſtly, love mer-y, walk humbly with God*; things with-us, which we know well enough he equires of us. And ſecondly, you ay obſerve that he ſaith, What doth

the Lord require of *thee* O man? He doth not bid us make other men do juſtly, and love mercy, *&c.* He doth not command us to quell other mens paſſions, but our own; nor govern other mens deſires and luſts, but thoſe that are in our ſelves. He exacts not of us their duties, whether it be of our children or ſervants, or any ſuch impoſſible task, but our own duty toward God and them. When we have done what we can to make them underſtand and do their duty, then ſaith the Scripture, God will not require their blood at our hand: But the ſoul that ſinneth, that ſhall die, and every ſoul ſhall bear its own iniquity.

Nor things unreaſonable.

2. He requires nothing *unreaſonable*, for he ſpeaks to us here in the Text as *men*. He bids us only love a greater good more then a leſs; a better thing more then a worſe; God more then the world; the ſoul more then the body. To do to others, as we would they ſhould do to us; to provide for a long life more then a ſhort; to lay up treaſure where none can take it away. He never bids us pray, unleſs we be in need;

need; nor give thanks, but when we have received a bleſſing. Do but ſhow that you are not in perpetual want, and he will not ask you to *pray without ceaſing*; Do but make it good that you receive not innumerable bleſſings every day, and he will not require you to give ſolemn and hearty thanks. Do but ſhew that it is better to be drunk then to be ſober, and you may take your fill; that a man can write better then God, and then you need not read his Word; that all time is your own, and then you may ſit at home, or recreate your ſelves on the Lords day. And ſo you may ſay of every other duty; not one of them is unreaſonable to be expected from us; for he commends the beſt things to us, and prefers a good to us before an evil; or a greater good before a leſs.

Nor things unnatural.

3. Nothing that is *unnatural*. I do not mean to corrupt nature; for ſo the moſt reaſonable thing that is may ſeem *unnatural*; as to provide for our parents; to keep our word when it is to our damage, *&c.* But to nature as

God made it, and to renewed nature, God requires nothing that is contrary. It cannot be unnatural to truſt God more then our riches; to live by faith in God; to depend upon his promiſes; yea to leave all for his ſake; and to truſt him with our lives, as well as our fortunes; to truſt him till another world, as well as in this. That which ſeems the hardeſt thing in Religion, is to lay down our lives if God call for them: to forſake every thing, rather then break the leaſt of his Commandments; and yet there is nothing unnatural in it, but it is according to the right conſtitution and nature of our ſouls, to let him diſpoſe of our lives and goods, who gave them to us; to truſt him with them, and with our ſelves. It is not unnatural to give our lives to the God of Life; eſpecially ſince he hath promiſed a better life, which makes it infinitely reaſonable, and ſo far from being unnatural, that it is deſirable to do and ſuffer what he pleaſes. Ἀφοβία μεγίστη τὸ φοβεῖσθαι τοὺς νόμους. Nothing puts us ſo much out of all fear, as to ſtand in the fear of the Laws.

*Synaſ. in Epiſt.*

Laws. And nothing puts us in such possession of our selves, as to give our selves to him.

But you must not think that when I say it is thus *good*, there is nothing in it that is harsh and sowre; for as the worst things may be grateful, so the best things may be unsavoury to a bad palate. To the flesh these things will not seem *good* till it be tamed and subdued, and then even the body will think it self bettered by them. Many sorts of poyson are sweet in the mouth, and many good medicines are as bitter. Many sins are pleasurable in the acting, though they be rank poyson, bitterness and gall when they are gone down and swallowed into the conscience: And on the contrary, many things are uneasie and distastful, which afterward yield the rarest delights, and the greatest benefits. We must not think that our duty is such, that we shall find no labour, no reluctance in it. No, it is not so easie as to eat our meat, or drink our drink; but being spiritual, it will find resistance from the flesh, and we must do some vio-

A caution.

lence to that at the first for our souls good. And then when we are used to our duty, it will be as natural to us as to eat; and though to put forth such acts of obedience may not be so easie as to go to a feast, yet in the acting, they will be no less sweet then our meat and drink.

No man then shall dare to plead his want of power to do Gods commands.

And if God require no unequal thing, let no man think to plead his own *inability*, to do Gods commands. Why should God give us a charge, if it were impossible to be kept? what good or wise master would require tasks that can never be performed? And besides, is it not as possible to forbear sin for Gods sake, as out of reverence to a person whom thou fearest? Canst thou not as well do what God commands, as what a friend enjoyns? Canst thou not as well forbear to be drunk, when none but God sees, as thou canst when the Magistrate or Minister is in company? And if thou canst be sober to day, then why not to morrow also? If for a week thou canst give thy self to reading and prayer, then why not for a moneth,

moneth, and so for a year, and so for ever? If thou canst be silent and hold thy tongue, why canst thou not keep from Oaths and evil language when thou speakest? And for other matters that are higher, if thou canst do these lower even by an ordinary grace, why canst thou not do them by the mighty power of Gods holy Spirit? If a man can abstain from much evil by himself, then why should he not be able to do good through God? There is no man shall have this pretence for himself at the day of Judgement, that he was unable to do what he knew; for then it will appear to all others and himself also, that he could have done more then he did. God required many things within himself; and for the rest, the Spirit of God that moved him to them, would have assisted him in them. Yea, even now it appears to mens own consciences, that they can have no such excuse; for that is the fourth Observation.

The fourth observation proved.

*That mens own consciences will speak against them, if they do not what God requires.* This is but a deduction from what hath been said, and is plainly also supposed in the text. For *first* you have seen that men have a full knowledge of their duty. They need not be told it; but the Question only being askt, it is supposed they can readily make an Answer. Or being named, it need not be proved, their own hearts instantly giving an assent. And therefore *secondly*, they must needs witness against themselves: for as they know what they ought to do, so they know when they do not as they ought. And they know without any information, so that if you do but ask the Question, they are sufficiently reproved of their negligence. And so *thirdly*, they will condemn themselves; for it is contrary to the mind, to approve of that which it knows it ought not to have done. As it is a *witness* against it self in matter of *fact*, so it will be a *Judge*, and condemn

demn it ſelf as to matter of *right*. And this is a great deal more then the Devil can do againſt any man of us. For though he may inform and accuſe, yet he cannot ſentence or condemn. And if a mans own conſcience was clear, he need not fear all his plaints, all the bills that he is able to put in againſt him. But the conſcience is not only Informer, and Accuſer, and Witneſs, but Judge alſo, and it ſentences and condemns us. And that *firſt* of all as unjuſt to God; and *ſecondly* falſe and cruel to our ſelves. For there was a debt owing unto God, and therefore we were unjuſt to him in not paying of it; and our own conſciences told us of it, and therefore we were treacherous, falſe and barbarous unto our ſouls, in violating their light, and acting contrary to thoſe known principles that are within them. They will alwayes be telling us of it, they will laſh us with everlaſting torments, and after they have, being their own *Judges*, they will turn *Executioners* and *Tortors* likewiſe of themſelves. So that *every wicked man is worſe then a Devil*

*Devil to himself*, and he carries his own hell about with him.

The danger of sinning against our conscience.

And therefore every one of us had need take heed how we render our selves guilty before God; for he need but send to our own souls and rouze them up, and they will become our greatest tormentors. As we set our selves against God, so will God set our selves against our selves. And as we are ready to impeach him of hardness and severity, so shall we most miserably indite our selves of cruelty and hard-heartedness to our own souls. And as we are apt to count him unreasonable in his demands, so shall we accuse our selves of unreasonableness; and our souls shall fall out with themselves as they did with him. Such a confusion doth sin make in the world, and in our selves. When we cease to be friends with God, we shall never after be friends with our own souls. When peace is broken with heaven, all the world is disturbed, and there is peace with nothing, no not with our own minds. Therefore as we love our selves, let us endeavour

to

to live in all good conſcience before God. Let us not do the leaſt evil, for to avoid the ſuffering of the greateſt evil; and let us not neglect any good, for the purchaſing of the beſt good the world affords. Take the heathen mans counſel, which it is a ſhame Chriſtians ſhould not follow.

Ζημίαν αἱρεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ κέρδος αἰσχρόν.
Ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἅπαξ ἐλύπησε, τὸ δὲ διὰ παντός. *Chilo apud Laert.*

*Chuſe any loſs, rather then a diſhoneſt gain; for that will trouble thee once; but this for ever.* It cannot be long before thou feeleſt that *occultum flagellum*, that hidden whip, the cords of which thou art continually twiſting for to laſh thy ſelf; and though it ſcourge thee with a ſilent ſtroke which no body hears, yet it will make thee cry and roar in an eternal miſery. Then thou that wouldſt not *do juſtly* to others, ſhalt do juſtice upon thy ſelf; and thou that loved'ſt not mercy, ſhalt be able to ſhew none to thy ſelf; and thou that behaved'ſt thy ſelf proudly and contemptuouſly againſt God, ſhalt ſeem the vileſt creature in thy

thy own eyes, and not have ſo much comfort, as to conceive a good opinion of thy ſelf.

But that all this which hath been thus briefly diſcourſed, may more fully and clearly manifeſt its truth, paſs we to the *fifth* obſervation, which is mainly intended.

---

The fifth obſervation.

THat *the duties which God requires of man, are, juſtice, mercy, and humble walking before him.* Theſe three are the things which I ſay are ſo plain, ſo good, ſo neceſſarily incumbent upon us, that our conſciences cannot deny their obligation. Theſe are the *Pandects* that contain all the Laws whereby we are to live; or rather, they are the *Breif*, the *Summary* of all thoſe Laws. God hath at large delivered his mind, and ſhewn his will in the Bible; but ſometimes he doth *epitomize* it, and contracts the ſumme of our duty into a few commands, which are as it were the quinteſſence and heart of the whole. The Hebrew Doctors obſerve, that there are in the Law of *Moſes*, ſix

*six hundred and thirteen* precepts. All these (say they) *David* comprehends in the compass of *eleven*, *Psalm* 15. The Prophet *Isaiah* again brings them into a smaller compass, and reduces them to *six* heads, which you may read in *Isa.* 33. 15. In *Micah* they are more compacted into *three*, naming this place which I am discoursing of. In *Isaiah* again they are brought to two, *Isa.* 56. 1. *Keep ye judgement, and do justice* (though our Saviour hath better epitomized them, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. *and thy neighbour as thy self*) And then comes the Prophet *Amos*, and he thrusts all into one, *Amos* 5. 4. *Seek ye me, and ye shall live.* But the Prophet *Habakuk* comes after and does it better (according to some of their opinions) saying, *The just shall live by faith*, *Hab.* 2. 4. which last place is much cited by the Apostle Saint *Paul*, and you see what is the sense of some of the Hebrews concerning it; that it is a compendious manner of speaking, and includes in its comprehension all that which God speaks in other places.

Thus

Our duty is sometimes reduced to a few heads in the holy Scripture.

*V. Gemara in Maccoth. cap.* 3.

Thus much *falſe Chriſtians* might learn of their enemies, that faith is not ſuch a lean and meagre thing as they make it, but is full of obedience to all Gods will. And according to this notion, I muſt look upon this part of my Text, as expreſſing in a few words, that which we muſt ſeek for at large in other parts of holy Writ, as repreſenting to us our whole duty toward God, and towards all men, yea and towards our ſelves alſo. For the opening of which, *three* things may be expected to be diſtinctly handled. 1. What it is to *do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.* 2. That God requires theſe things of us. 3. That they are Good, and it is no unkindneſs in God to exact them. But for brevity ſake, I will do all theſe three together, and as I ſhew what is meant by *doing juſtly*, &c. ſubjoyn ſome arguments for their being due to God, and likewiſe good to us.

1. What it is to do justly.

*To do justly*, is to give every one that which is his own. And it contains in it all the duties of the *second Table*, especially of the *eighth Commandment*. Sometimes justice or righteousness is taken *largely* for all Religion. Sometimes *more strictly* for our duty toward our neighbour, as to matters of right. And sometimes *most strictly*, for the duties of the eighth Commandment, to defraud no man, to with-hold from none what we owe them; nor rob them, or take away from them that which they have in their possession. And here it may possibly be taken in the strictest sense, so that all the rest of those Commandments must be included in the phrase of *walking humbly with God*. But if it be extended to all of them, then by vertue of the *fifth* Commandment, *to do justly*, is to give our parents due honour, whether they be *natural, civil* or *spiritual*. And in respect of the *sixth*, it is to preserve the life of our neighbour, and to have a care that we injure

jure him not in his being. In reference to the *seventh*, it is to preſerve his juſt relations, and not to touch them, or cauſe the violation of their faith to him. And in reference to the *eighth*, it is to preſerve his eſtate, and not meddle with his goods. And the *ninth* requires that we preſerve his good name, and not defame him, nor do any prejudice to his credit, no more then we would to his eſtate. And by vertue of the *tenth*, we are to moderate our very deſires, ſo as not to envy to him that which is his, and long to have it in our poſſeſſion. And thus in General I may give you ſome remembrances of this part of our duty.

1. That we muſt not *with-hold* from any man his due, if it be in our hands. Whether it be due by our *Promiſe*, or by his *Labour*; by his *truſt* repoſed in us, or by our *offence* againſt him; for we are bound in this laſt caſe to make ſatisfaction and reparation to him.

2. We muſt not *take* from any man that which is his own, whether in his or any other mans poſſeſſion. Neither by our

our words, as through lying, falſe-ſwearing, *&c.* nor by our deeds, as ſtealing, robbing, or any other wayes.

3. And we muſt not deſire or covet that which is another mans, nor look with an evil or greedy eye upon any thing that he enjoys. For this is *juſtice* in our ſouls, as the other two are in our outward actions: and it is this baſe *covetous* and *having* diſpoſition, which makes men that they cannot forbear ſuch violent actions.

Now how plain is all this to be underſtood, and how meet is it to be done? What injuſtice do you find in God, for requiring juſtice at your hands? The very definition of this act, is to give to every one their due, or letting men have what is their own. And if it be reaſonable in others towards you, then it is moſt reaſonably required of you towards them. And if you may demand it from them, and they from you, then much more may God demand it of you all. The relation that is between us and others, requires it of us; and God made both

It is no injuſtice to require it of us.

them and us, and those relations; and therefore he may require this of thee, *O man*, whosoever thou art. He doth but bid thee do what any heathen will tell thee is thy duty, if thou owneſt thy ſelf to be a man, and intendeſt to live among men, and not to be deſtroyed as a beaſt of prey. *Ariſtotle* or any Lawgiver, could not call for leſs juſtice then God doth; only God requires it in words of greater force to engage us to it. It is well obſerved by a moſt learned Divine of our own, that what *Ariſtotle* calls τὸ δίκαιον ἀπονέμειν, *to give a man his own*, the holy Apoſtle calls, *Rom.* 14. 7. ἀποδοῦναι τὰς ὀφειλάς, *to render him his dues or debts*. Both theſe words of the Apoſtle are more ſignificant then thoſe of the Philoſopher's, which may teach us that *Chriſtianity requires under ſtricter bonds that which morality demands*. For ὀφειλὴ *a debt*, or *that which is owing*, is more expreſſive of our obligations then τὸ δίκαιον, *his own*, or *his property*. We are debtors unto juſtice, and ſtand bound to our neighbours by our *own act and deed*, ſo that he may ſoon prove it is his own

D. *Saunderſon. Serm. in* 1 Pet. 2. 17.

which

which he requires. And then ἀποδοῦναι, *surrender* or *restore*, is more full of justice then διανέμειν, *to give* or *distribute*. For it signifies the *returning* of that which we have borrowed of our neighbour; and therefore he saith in the next verse, *Owe no man any thing*, but to love one another. Every act of Justice is but the paying of what we have received; for he doth justice to us, and therefore we owe it back again to him. We do but pay him with his own coyn, and discharge that duty which not only God, but he hath obliged us unto. Not that it is lawful to cozen them that cozen us, and thus to render men as we receive; for that is but to be as dishoneſt as they who would not pay us that debt which we took our selves to be bound in unto them. And there is a publick justice likewise to which we owe much; for it preserves our estates, and from thence we look for satisfaction for our wrongs.

And he is some savage wilde creature, who sees not all this to be *good*. for our neighbour, no question, it is

And it is very good for us.

*good* that we ſhould *do juſtly*; and if for him, then for us; for in his welfare our own welfare conſiſts, we being both members of the ſame body; and in his honeſty is our ſafety. And therefore they that will not be honeſt themſelves, would have all men elſe honeſt, and think that it is the beſt thing in the world that all ſhould deal juſtly with them. But how can any man expect that from another, which he will not vouchſafe to him? or by what reaſon is it that we muſt ingroſs all *good* to our ſelves, and let our neighbour have none of it? If we would have the monopoly of it, we ſhall never purchaſe it, for men will deſtroy ſuch Wolves and Foxes that raven for themſelves, and do no good at all to others. Or if they do not ſpy their ſubtilty, but it is covered in darkneſs, God will tear the prey out of their mouthes, and the righteous Lord will make them know that it is *bad* to do unrighteouſly. For commonly we ſee that they who do wrong to others, are in themſelves or poſterity laid open to the violence of ſuch like unjuſt perſons.

ons. And ſo the *Eaſtern Fable* taught he people, that the Woolf having oln a Pigg, was met withall by a Ly-n, who took it away from him, and it as a wonder that he was not himſelf lſo torn in pieces. That which was ot well gotten, could not well thrive; nd men might conſider in the midſt f a violent act, that if they can find their heart to be diſhoneſt, there ay be others in the world of the me mind, that will make no conſci-ce to deal with them as diſhoneſtly. am very much pleaſed therefore ith the Northern proverb, *That it is ad ſport to be honeſt:* The world ay ſmile a while upon men in their ſhoneſt gain, and they may laugh at eir good fortune; but *the triumphing the wicked is ſhort, and the joy of the ypocrite is but for a moment.* If a man ave but a little that is juſtly gotten, it a great treaſure; for he *gains* a good onſcience, which will continually aſt him. But wickedneſs, though it e ſweet in the mouth, yet it is the all of Aſps within: and beſides, the iches that ſuch a man ſwallows down, Job 20. 5.

Job 20. 12, 14, 15.

he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

Good for whole Kingdoms, as well as for private men.

And it is no less *good* for whole Nations, then it is for private men, to do justly; for they subsist by it, and it is the pillars of government, of peace and tranquillity. Every act of Justice is as a pin in a building, which joyns the parts of it faster together, and maintains the intireness of the whole body. And when any man defrauds another, he pulls out a little pin, loosens the joynts, and doth what he can to bring all things to ruine. Either men become enemies to each other, and are in a state of war when wrong is committed; or else they stand at a distance, and will have nothing to do with each other any more; and both wayes Society is dissolved; that Communion which is the foundation of Common-wealths is over-turned.

But see what the Scripture saith in all these cases; where many blessings are promised to just men, and curses are threatned upon all others, *Prov.* 3. 33. *The curse of the Lord is in the house*

*house of the wicked; but he blesseth the habitation of the just.* A curse indeed, enough to make a whole volume, for *Zachary* saw a flying roll, a sheet of parchment as large as our Books, writ on both sides with woes against the thieves and false swearers, *Zach.* 5, 3, 4. A place which I have taken notice of in the foregoing papers, and I will add by the way here, That a *flying roll* may not only denote the speed which that Book full of curses would make to come upon them; but also that the volume was open and spread forth, so that all might read it. For you know when a sheet is not rouled up, but hangs expanded, it is moved by the wind, and flies as it were up and down in the air. Believe therefore the same wise man who saith, *Prov.* 10. 25. *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.* If you compare this verse with the *second*, it will seem likely, that by a *righteous* man, he means one who *doth justly*, and thereby takes a course to settle himself; and by a *wicked* man, an oppressor, who may

ſoon loſe all that he hath unjuſtly got. Unrighteouſneſs you ſee will be our own loſs, more then any other mans; and therefore to do juſtly, is not more anothers *good* and *gain*, then it is our own. And ſo you may read, *Prov.* 11. 11. *Prov.* 14. 34. where he ſhews the general concernment of Cities and Nations, of leſſer and greater Communities in righteous dealing. King *Canutus* knew this ſo well, that when he had condemned many malefactors, and one deſired it might be conſidered he was of the blood-royal, and have ſome favour: He ſaid, So he ſhall; let him be hanged upon an higher Gibbet. That Juſtice which he obſerved in puniſhments, if all would obſerve in their promiſes, Covenants, contracts, and all their dealings and intercourſes, they would baniſh ſuits, quarrels, wars and tumults out of the world. Peace would grow and flouriſh on this root; and how great a *good* that is, we in this Nation by this time may have learnt. This would make our ſwords ruſty, and our armor good for nothing but to hang up in

Pſal. 85. 10.

our

our houſes, and ſhew that we were once miſerable. All that the thunder and lightning of our Guns telleth us, is the worlds injuſtice, from which we muſt either be defended or delivered: Let this ceaſe, and they will all be ſilent. This will put out the fires which nothing elſe will quench; and bury the enmities which elſe will alwayes be maintained. It was a wiſe and a true anſwer (with which I will conclude this) which *Ageſilaus* gave to one, who askt him whether *Fortitude* or *Juſtice* were the greater vertue, *Εἰ μὲν ἀνδρείας χρήζομεν οὐ πάντες ἄμεν δίκαιοι: We ſhould have no need of your valour, if we were all juſt.*

---

AS to *do juſtly*, is to give to men that which is *their own*; ſo to *love mercy*, is to give to others that which is *our own*. Or rather Juſtice *renders*, and mercy *gives* to men that which is their due. For that which is ours may be *due* to others who are in need, though not by mans Laws, yet by Gods. And there is a kind of *Juſtice* even

2. What it is to love mercy.

even in mercy, in so much that in Scripture-language, *righteousness* frequently signifies giving of Alms, and a *just* man, signifies one that is *Good*. But as these two stand distinguished, *justice* requires that every man have his due; and *mercy*, that he have what is not by meer justice due to him. Three sorts of men there are, say some of the antient Hebrews, and every one of them hath his peculiar saying. The *first* is the *unjust*, and he saith, *That which is mine is mine, and that which is thine is mine.* The *second* sort is the *just*, and his saying is, *That which is mine is mine, and that which is thine is thine.* The *third* sort is the *good* or *merciful*, and he saith, *That which is thine is thine, and that which is mine is thine.* He will not take away from others what is his, but give to them what is his own; and the Apostle is thought by some to allude to this distinction of men, when he saith, *Rom.* 5. 7, 8. *Scarcely for a Righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.* I should prolong this discourse beyond its just bounds,

bounds, if I should mention all the particular acts of mercy: Let it suffice therefore in General to tell you,

1. That sometimes we must let go our own right, and those *dues* which in justice others are bound to pay unto us. Strict justice may sometimes be a kind of injustice, *i. e.* it may overthrow the ends of justice, which is preserving of humane society. And all will confess that it is so hard, severe and oppressive to the parties of whom it is exacted, that what *mercy* requires in this case, is very much like the demands of Justice. This bids us to make abatements sometimes of what in strictness we might ask; and to deal favourably and gently with all men. Where men have had great losses, and their estates are much broken, we must not hold them rigorously to agreements. Neither must we take all advantages of our Brethren, nor seize on a mortgage when they cannot pay; nor sue a bond, nor turn a man out of his lease, when he misses his day. And a thousand such like cases there

We must not alwayes exact our due.

there are, wherein mercy calls for that which is named kindneſs and favour.

We muſt give to others what they need.

But *ſecondly*, as we muſt not alwayes require what is our own in other mens hands, ſo we muſt alwayes give to the poor what is in our own hands. We muſt relieve the diſtreſſed, defend the fatherleſs, plead the cauſe of the widdow, viſit and help the ſick, deliver the priſoner and captive; and be ſo far from requiring in ſome caſes what others owe us; that we muſt give them more to ſupport their feeble eſtate withall. Many actions of *mercy* there are to mens ſouls, which I ſhall not mention, but in general tell you, that under this word are included all actions of Charity, pitty and compaſſion toward our neighbour. And we muſt charge our ſelves with them, as we do with actions of *Juſtice*. And be as careful not to with-hold ſupplies from the poor, as we are not to ſteal: and not to ſay them nay when we are able, no more then we muſt lye to our Brother: and we muſt make proviſion for them, and do them good, as diligently

ligently as we watch over our ſelves, that we take not away from them, nor do them evil. The covetous is abhorred of God, as well as the thief; the unmerciful as well as the murderer. And therefore a man muſt not content himſelf that none can charge him with doing wrong: but his light muſt ſhine before men, and he muſt give Alms of ſuch things as he hath. And likewiſe he muſt deal fairly with all men, and not with a griping hand, and an over-reaching head; and he muſt be ready to forgive all them that have treſpaſſed againſt him, and not hold them to over-ſtrict ſatisfaction.

There are many *blind worldlings*, many moles and earth-grubbers, that pudder and ſcrape in the earth all their dayes, and they do not invade any of their neighbours poſſeſſions, nor encroach upon their ground, but content themſelves in their holes: and yet they do no good at all, nor bring any benefit to the world. They ſeem not ſo bad as rats, that eat our meat, and cloathes, and books; but yet none is the better for them: and at laſt many are

Too many think it ſufficient to be juſt; but it is hard ſo to be, if we be not merciful.

are much the worſe. As the mole, though ſhe take nothing away from our ground, but ſeems to raiſe it higher; yet in time ſhe deſtroyes it all, by her hills which ſhe caſts up: So theſe men, though they do not plainly pick mens pockets, and rob them: though they raiſe fair houſes, and ſeem to make Towns more ſplendid where they live, yet they ſecretly work out all the old inhabitants, and make it all their own dwelling. They are as the ſpleen in the body, and draw all they can from others to fill their own bags; and the hard conditions which they hold men unto, with their obſtinate refuſal to relieve a decaying perſon, undoes many round about them.

God juſtly requires mercy of us.

But that it is meet we ſhould do otherwayes, appears not only from that great rule of our Actions, *to do to others as we would they ſhould do to us*, were their condition ours, and ours theirs: but alſo from the great mercifulneſs of our God to us. We ſtand in need every day of Gods mercy, both in *giving* and *forgiving*, and why ſhould it be thought hard that he bids

us

us relieve the needy, when we our ſelves are in ſo much need, and he thinks not much to relieve us? But beſides, if it be hard for us to part with a little out of abundance; how hard is it to them, to want not only the abundance, but that little? And again, ſince God gives all to us, he may entail it upon us and our heirs, on what conditions he pleaſes, and what great matter is it, if this be one, that we give ſome of it away to others? And truly this is one of the things that makes it *good*; for there is no ſuch way of ſaving and preſerving, as by giving: and no ſuch way of loſing, as by unmerciful ſaving. This cuts off the intail from many a fair eſtate, that the laſt Lord of it was a covetous miſerable wretch. And beſides, God bids us here *love mercy*, which we could not do if it were not *Good*. Neither will God tye us, as you heard, to ſuch hard conditions, as to delight in our own miſchief. And therefore all ingenuous heathens have counted it a piece of ſingular contentment to do good, and ſom looked upon it as a becoming *little gods*

Mercy is for our good.

*gods* in the world. This, if any thing, likewiſe, will draw the love and affection of others to us, not to ſay their petty adorations. A great light and ſplendor ſuch actions caſt abroad, when they are not done out of popularity and vain-glory, but out of love to mercy, and to God the father of mercies; and they get a man honour without deſiring of it, or taking any other pains to ſeek it. And there is not only *pleaſure* and *credit* in this noble vertue, but as much profit as heart can deſire. It muſt needs be *good*, becauſe it is called in Scripture *doing of good*; and though the phraſe properly imports the good of others, yet let me tell you, we hereby beſtow no ſmall boons upon our ſelves. God ſo loves it, that he loves thoſe that love it, and hath promiſed great rewards to them and theirs, in this world, and in the world to come. *With the merciful, be will ſhew himſelf merciful*, Pſalm 18. 25. *Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain mercy*, Mat. 5. 7. *There is that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth: The liberal ſoul ſhall*

*be*

*be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself*, Prov. 11. 25, 26. *His righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour*, Psalm 112. 9. This is an argument upon which I might dilate till night: For there are no less treasures for the merciful man, then the rich man hath of wealth in his house; yea infinitely more, for he layes up his treasure in heaven; where God hath bound himself to pay him with usury and increase.

---

AND now for the third thing, *What it is to walk humbly with God?* it is not fit that I should give you much more then the heads of discourse, unless I intended of a Sermon to make a treatise.

3. What it is to walk humbly.

*First* therefore, *think lowly of thy self*, which is a great part of this duty. So the word *humbly* is often taken, especially in compare with God, from whom we and all we have do come, and on whom they continually depend. As thou givest to others *their*

To think meanly of our selves.

own, yea *thine* own; so assume to thy self no more then is thine own: yea call nothing that is good thine own, but acknowledge God in all, be it riches, or beauty, or learning, or health, or grace it self. When thou exercisest *justice and mercy*, do not take it to be a matter of high desert: but think that thou only doest as becomes a man, and thou dost thy self a great deal of right and kindness in it: and what thou dost, it is from God, who gives both the will and ability to do it.

Bewail thy imperfections.

2. *Mourn and lament over thy self.* Think lowly of thy self, when thou art at the best: and then moan over, and bemoan thy self, that thou art no better. This is called in *Ahab*, humbling of himself, which though it were but outward, yet was answered with an outward blessing. And thus they are joyned together, *Jam.* 4. 9, 10.

Obey Gods commands.

3. *Readily subject thy self to all Gods commands.* He that truly mourns and is sad that he is no better, strives most sincerely, and uses all means to be as good

good as he can. His heart riſes not againſt any of Gods commands, he thinks nothing too ſtrict which God enjoyns. He willingly gives up his liberty and choice to God, which is an act of the greateſt humility imaginable. Not my will (Lord) but thy will be done, is not only his language, but the ſenſe of his ſoul. And what greater ſubjection can there be in a man, then to have no will of his own, but to part with it unto another? This makes all ſin ſo abominable, becauſe it bids defiance to God, and diſowns in a proud ſort his authority: and this makes goodneſs ſo acceptable, becauſe it makes us lay our ſelves at Gods feet, to know his pleaſure, and debaſes us to nothing. We claim no power over our ſelves, or any thing that we have, own no right at all to diſpoſe of any thing as we pleaſe, when we humbly walk with God.

4. And in particular, we muſt *reverently worſhip him* by all Acts of prayer and praiſes. *O come let us worſhip, and fall down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*, Pſal. 95. 6. A Pſalm not unfitly

Worſhip him with reverence.

fitly appointed to be used heretofore in the beginning of divine service, to remember us how reverently and solemnly we should address our selves unto Gods worship. And let me tell you this, that it becomes us to enter into the place where we tender our services unto God, with more humility and composedness, then ordinarily now appears. It is not a sign of a good Spirit, to come either with an haughty and high look, or with a careless and garish eye, much less laughing and talking, when we are going to humble our selves, and fall down before the Lord. But we ought to enter even into the place where we intend to perform our obeysance to him, with reverent thoughts, submissive looks, and a bashful countenance, as being deeply sensible of our unworthiness to approach into his presence. There is a tradition among the Hebrews, that *David* learnt but two things of *Achitophel*, and he made him his master, his friend, and his privy-counsellour for them. And the one of them was by way of reproof, because he came into the

the School, the house of Teaching, (בית סרבש) with his head lifted up, which had the face of rashness and pride in it. Oh that men would now profit so much by reproofs, and count them their friends that tell them of their faults; and that they would learn likewise to come into the house of God with more becoming reverence in their faces then ordinarily they do!

*V. P. Fagium in Pirk. Av. cap. 6.*

5. *Meekly submit to Gods corrections.* As thou must not chuse thy *work*, so neither must thou chuse thy *wage*. All impatience comes from pride, and our murmurings are bred by too goodly thoughts of our own selves. Alas! what are we, more then many others, that we should expect to be so tenderly handled? What great matters can we do with that wealth, or riches, or credit, which we would never have to absent themselves from us? Nay, what condition is bad enough for such wretches? What a wonder is it, that such unprofitable creatures are not banished out of the world? If we thought thus

5. Exercise meekness in afflictions.

oft-times with our ſelves, we ſhould become very *humble*; *i. e.* meek, patient, and contented under all that befalls us. One act of *humility* begets another; and he that thinks meanly of himſelf, will not be angry that he is afflicted.

6. Subjection to our Governors.

6. *Be peaceable and obedient to Governors*, who are gods in the world, and to whom God hath bidden us, that we ſhould ſubject our ſelves. *Submit your ſelves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords ſake, whether it be to the King as ſupream, or unto Governors*, &c. 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. It is an high act of pride and inſolency, to controle the authority that is over us, and to ſet up our own wills above Gods vicegerents. For it is a great contempt of the majeſty of God, whoſe *image* they more remarkably bear, and with whoſe *effigies* they are more viſibly ſtampt then other men. We muſt alway therefore do what they command us, or elſe ſuffer what they inflict upon us. And if we chuſe the latter, we muſt ſuffer as meekly and peaceably, as if it was an immediate hand of heaven upon

upon us. For if *Solomon* say of every man, *That proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath*, *Prov.* 21. 24. then much more is he to be branded in the for-head, for a man superlatively proud, who cannot endure to be touched in body or estate, but it casts him into the highest inflammations of anger, even against the *highest powers*.

7. *Moderately and temperately use Gods mercies.* The word σωφρονεῖν, which signifies to be temperate, is applyed frequently to the mind, in opposition to pride and self-conceitedness. For sobriety indeed proceeds from an humble sense, that nothing is ours, but all that we have is Gods; and that we have right to nothing, but what he gives, and as he allows. And all drunkenness, wantonness, and whatsoever other intemperance there is in the world, is commonly the issue of an haughty, giant-like temper of spirit, which makes men look upon themselves as Lords and owners; and all creatures as their proper goods, which are perfectly at their disposal.

7. Temperance and sobriety in the use of what we enjoy.

The *crown of pride*, and the *drunkards of Ephraim*, are both names for the same persons, *Isa.* 28. 1, 3. For besides that such men have no regard to a supream being, they look bigg upon all their inferiours; and no beasts likewise do kick more against the reproofs or counsels of Gods Prophets, then such as they.

8. Modestly in looking for a reward.

8. *Modestly expect a reward from God*, when thou hast done these and all other good actions. That word which is here in my text rendred *humble*, doth frequently occurr in the Jewish writings, for *shamefac'tness* and *modesty*. And therefore I add this at the last, as the top of all, that when we have done all our *work* with the greatest strictness; yet we must look for our *wages* from meer mercy and benevolence. This *humility* is the greatest ornament, and the fairest of all the graces in Gods sight. We never look more beautiful, then when we blush at our own defects, and dare not cast our eyes confidently upon God. The highest act of *Faith*, is a piece of the lowest *humility*. When we rely most upon Gods

Gods *mercy*, we utterly diſclaim all our own *merits*.

But as that act of *Faith*, whereby we caſt our ſelves on Gods mercy, is not all the acts of it, but ſuppoſes many others foregoing; even ſo it is in this act of *humility*, whereby we acknowledge our ſelves unworthy to receive any reward from Gods hand: It is ſo far from being all the humility that God requires, that there muſt precede all the other acts which I have mentioned, before this can take its place. Many men can eaſily diſclaim all truſt in their own righteouſneſs, becauſe they have none to truſt in. But they are truly humble men, that are juſt and righteous, and yet truſt not in that for their acceptance with God to ſalvation. You cannot ſay, that a man is wiſe, becauſe he holds his peace, when he is dumb and tongue-tyed: But he is a wiſe perſon, who can ſpeak well, and yet ſilently hearkens. No more can he be deemed poor in ſpirit, who hath no riches nor treaſures in his ſoul to brag of; but he only, who is enriched with knowledge,

ledge, and faith, and love, and all good works, and yet is lowly in heart, poor in his own thoughts, and acknowledges that he is but an unprofitable servant.

The justice and goodness of all this.

Now all this is but *just*, because of our dependance on God, his superiority over us, and his excellency above us. On all which when we look, we must say with *Job*, 42. 5, 6. *Now mine eye seeth thee; and therefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes.* And it is no less *good*, then it is just. For *first*, *He that lyes low, lyes safe.* He cannot fall far, who stands on the ground; but whether can he fall who lyes already upon it? We shall not be in danger to tumble down from great hopes and expectations, if we be so humble as to have no high opinion of our selves and deservings. The lowest valleys are the safest from wind and storms; and God hath promised to preserve the meek, and that they shall inherit the earth. Who will harm modest and submissive persons, that had rather put up an injury, then do any; that are loving, peaceable, and

and quiet in the Land? None but thoſe, againſt whom no men be defended. And ſecondly, *He that lyes low, is moſt fruitful.* The mountains are commonly barren, and the valleys are moſt richly laden. For the Lord reſiſts the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. And thirdly, *He that lyes low, is bleſſed from above with all that is good for him.* The leſs he expects, the more he ſhall have; the more unworthy he judges himſelf to be, the more fit he is to have his emptineſs filled. The ſhowres that run of from the high heads of mountains, run down into the boſom of valleys. Moſt of heavens plenty falls into the loweſt places; and ſo do moſt of Gods favours and bleſſings fall into humble ſouls. They that behave themſelves as it becomes them, in meekneſs, moderation, obedience, modeſty, *&c.* God will make good his Word unto them. The meek ſhall eat and be ſatisfied, and praiſe the name of the Lord; They ſhall lye down, and none ſhall make them afraid. He will keep them in perfect peace, in a ſweet ſerenity

nity and quiet of Spirit. He will exalt them in due time, and open even the gate of heaven unto them; not to pour down blessings on them, as now he doth; but to receive them up to his blessings. This discourse would swell too much, if I should particularly show the goodness of every one of the fore-mentioned acts of humility; and therefore it shall suffice to have given these light touches upon some of them.

---

Application.

I. Be humbled for sins against these commands.

NOW if these things be so as I have discoursed; then *first* let us begin to put in practice a part of the duty last mentioned, by *being deeply humbled* for all our sins, against these plain and familiar commands. Let every man search into himself how far he hath gone along with the stream; for it is manifest, that covetousness and oppression, hard-heartedness and cruelty, pride and irreligion, have come in like a flood upon us in this Nation, and born many away before them. As for *Justice*, we may take up the

the complaint of *Petrarch* concerning the Age wherein he lived, that hunters and fowlers uſe not greater cunning in laying their nets and ſnares for wild beaſts and fowls, then crafty men do to inveigle and inſnare the ſimple and plain-meaning people. Or we may ſay with one of his Countrey-men (which is now become a proverb in *Italy*) *That by deceit and cunning, men live half the year, and by cunning and deceit the other half.* And *Mercy* is ſuch a ſtranger to mens hearts, that we count him a perſon of great tenderneſs, that will not deceive us at all; and a very merciful creature, who will not deceive us as much as he can. So little kindneſs and good nature is ſtirring; that we are apt to ſuſpect them of deſigns, who make much of us; and we dare ſcarce receive mens courteſies. And what is a great deal of our *Religion*, but an humourſom kind of devotion; a proud ſelf conceited pleaſing of our ſelves, with a faſtidious contempt of all others? Where is that awefulneſs in mens countenances when they converſe with God, that tenderneſs of heart

heart at the mention of any of his commands; that bewailing of their ſins; that patience, peaceableneſs, acceptance of the puniſhment of their iniquities that ought to appear? We may almoſt ſay with this Prophet in the next Chapter, *The good man is periſhed out of the earth, and there is none upright among men.* For could there be ſo much ſpoil (think you) committed in the midſt of us, and no injuſtice? Such eſtates ſo quickly gotten, and no covetouſneſs? So much blood ſhed, and no hatreds? So many contentions, quarrels and hot diſputes; and no uncharitableneſs? So many vain opinions, and no pride? Such unſteadineſs in the wayes of God, and no ſelf-conceitedneſs in mens hearts? Such contempt of the Miniſtry and all that is ſacred, and no irreligion? We muſt begin therefore to amend, by acknowledging theſe ſins, and ſeriouſly bemoaning them, either in our ſelves or others.

Mic. 7. 2.

2. Amend in all theſe things.

But our amendment muſt not end here, nor muſt we think by blubbered eyes and lamentable groans, to draw God

God to be a party with us in theſe ſins. No, we muſt ſincerely proceed to a practice of all theſe duties, which the Prophet and our own conſciences loudly call for; and the rather, becauſe they have been ſo much laid aſide and neglected, or at leaſt, ſome of them ſet up to thruſt out all the reſt.

And *firſt* for *Juſtice*, let us put away all iniquity, if there be any in our hands, and all covetous deſires which we find lurking in our hearts. Let every one ſay as the Pſalmiſt doth, *Pſalm* 139. 23, 24. *Search me O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts: And ſee if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlaſting.* If thou haſt wronged any man, make him ſatisfaction. Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another. Detain not the wages of the hireling. Let no man go beyond his Brother, or defraud him in any thing. Let his relations, and goods, and every thing he hath, be as an *holy thing* to thee, which thou mayſt not lay thine hand upon. We are told of an

Firſt be more juſt.

Ælian. var. hiſt. l. 4. 1.

an heathen people who were ſo juſt, that if they found any thing in the high-way, they would not take it up, thinking the owner would come ere long to ſeek it, to whom it did of right belong. I wiſh there were but half ſo much juſtice among Chriſtians, who not only cozen others when it comes in their way, and have fair opportunities preſented, but uſe all ſorts of circumventions, and will go a great way about to ſeek an occaſion to deceive them. It is grown to be an art and a ſtudy how to cheat a neighbour; and whereas thoſe heathen boggled at an εὕρημα, (as they called it) a thing which was *found*, and thought it an injury to take it up; Chriſtians make no ſcruple of a ζήτημα, (as I may phraſe it) an injuſtice which they *ſeek* for, and are inquiſitive to find wayes of bringing it to paſs. And ſad it is to conſider, for how little men will venture to diſpleaſe God, and what a ſmall gain will tempt them to do unjuſtly. If a man could get all the world by one act of unrighteouſneſs, he would be a great loſer by the bargain;

bargain; but there are ſuch vile and cheap ſouls, that will not ſtick for a ſmall ſum of money, perhaps for no ſum at all to do not one, but many injurious acts to their neighbours. A little conſideration (methinks) would amend men in ſuch a matter as this; and the thoughts only of its folly might work a cure upon them without a Sermon againſt it. Fear of loſing *all* might make them carefull not to have *a farthing* that is got unjuſtly, if they had but ſo much obſervation as little children, who uſe to ſay, that after they once cheat, they never thrive in their games. I know it is a deſire of being rich, and indeed of being rich preſently, that thruſts men forward into ſuch baſe and unworthy courſes; But God doth ſo order it, that nothing more hinders the accompliſhment of their deſire, then the way they take to attain it. There is a great truth in the *Spaniſh* proverb, that *He who will be rich in one year, ſhall be hang'd at the half years end.* Exceeding greedineſs may make men do ſuch villanous acts that they cannot be indured, but are brought to ruine

by them. But howſoever in the Proverb of the wiſe man, there is an infallible verity, *Prov.* 28. 22. *He that haſteth to be rich, hath an evil eye; and conſidereth not that poverty ſhall come upon him.* See alſo *v.* 20. and *chap.* 20. 22. Put away therefore all falſehood and guile; all covetouſneſs and violence; if it be but to ſave the eſtate that you have, and that you may get more, and have it laſt longer: But you will conſult better for your ſelves if you do thus out of obedience to God, and reſpect to your Brethren; as it is a part of that duty which God and man oblige you unto.

And as for *Kings* and *Princes* they are engaged above all other men to do juſtly, ſeeing they are the *leaders* of the people, by whoſe examples they are inclined to live, and by whoſe righteous management of things they live happily. It was a moſt pernicious Maxime, and altogether unworthy of a good man (as one of his own party in expreſs terms acknowledges) which Pope *Clement* the eighth had often in his mouth, viz. *That Kings and Sove-*

V. Cardinal. de Oſſat. Epiſt. 66. part. 1. & Epiſt. 81. *Les Roys & autres primes Souverains ſe permettoient toutes choſes qui tournoient à leur profit*, &c.

*raign*

*raign Princes may do any thing which will make for their profit.* And a ſhame it is to their religion that he could add in juſtification of this ſaying, that matters are come to ſuch a paſs, that it is not at all imputed to them, nor redounds to their diſhonour, if they break their faith, forſwear themſelves, lie, betray their allies, and do any other thing of like nature. But theſe wicked principles which he made uſe of on purpoſe to perſwade the King of *France* to break his league with *England*, are moſt excellently confronted by a golden ſpeech of that Cardinal who reports theſe things, in which all ſuch perſons are much concerned. *At the foot of the account* ſaith he (ſpeaking of King *James* his moderation when he came to the Crown of *England*) *You ſhall find, that the better and more juſtly any man ſhall rule, to the honour and glory of God, and to the comfort, profit and happineſs of his ſubjects; the more aſſured his eſtate ſhall be; the more ſtrong, the more beloved and bleſſed ſhall he be of God, and men: in which conſiſts the true and laſting*

*Epiſt. 177. part. 2. au Monſ. de Villeroy.*

*grandeur and puiſſance of Kings, and the aſſurance of their poſterity.* Nay *Ageſilaus* had better notions of Divine things in this particular then that *Pope*, who when ſome told him the *Great King* (*i. e.* the King of *Perſia*) would have it ſo; anſwered, *How can he be greater then me, unleſs he be more juſt and more ſober?* Upon the mentioning of which, *Plutarch* gives this excellent admonition, *By juſtice, as by a royal ſtandard, we ſhould take the meaſure of mens heights one above another.* If we were in a ſtate of war, and one ſhould make a motion to ſuch great perſons *to do juſtly*, perhaps he might receive ſuch an anſwer as *Antigonus* gave a Philoſopher who preſented him with a treatiſe of this ſubject; *Thou art a fool to give me now a book concerning juſtice, when thou ſeeſt I am beſieging other mens Caſtles, and making war upon their Cities*: But when things are ſetled, and when it is apparent that violent dealing comes upon mens own heads; then ſure a man may be believed, if he ſay, that there is no other way to thrive, nor can a *Prince* live by any ſuch proſperous

*Plutarch. in Vit. Ageſ. & in Apotheg.* Δεῖ πρὸς δικαίῳ καθάπερ μέτρῳ βασιλικῷ μετρεῖσθαι τὸν ὑπερέχοντα τὸν μείζονα.

ſperous doctrine as that of Juſtice and piety. Then ſure, if not at other times, one may propoſe the example of an heathen Emperour to them, who was ſo taken with that ſaying of our Saviours, *Math.* 7.12. that he cauſed this ſentence to be writ in ſundry places upon the walls of his pallace, *Do not that to another, which thou wouldſt not have done to thee.*

*Alex. Severus. Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris. Æl. Lamprid.*

And all under-officers and miniſters of publique buſineſs had need hear this doctrine continually ſounding in their ears, becauſe it is ſo contrary to their worldly intereſts to practiſe it exactly. When men have power and opportunity to gratifie their covetous deſires, they will find that they need a very divine power to enable them to deny them. "It is very "ſtrange (ſaith the Maſter of modern "Eloquence) that the great *Turk* can "intruſt his wives to the vigilancy of "others, and aſſure himſelf their cha- "ſtity will thereby be conſerved; yet "that *Kings* know not to whom they "may ſafely encharge their treaſures. "But the true reaſon is, for that an ho- "neſt man is by ſo much more difficultly

*Balzack.*

"found then an *Eunuch*, by how much "*miracles* are more rare then *Monsters*. "Great fortitude is requisite to the ob- "taining of honesty, but the will on- "ly suffices to become covetous. And therefore seeing it is necessary to do some violence to our selves, to keep us from doing violence to others; such persons have great reason to thank those who will lay their hands daily upon their corrupt affections by holy admonitions & counsels; not only to restrain & setter, but to slay and mortifie them.

And to conclude this; let us all be sure to remember it is not enough to praise justice, and make speeches in its commendation; nor to have some affection to it by convictions in our minds of its reasonableness and profit; but we must *do justly*, as my text speaks: and all our actions must be conform to the principles which we praise. This I say the rather, because it hath been noted that men of excellent *intellectuals* have had bad *morals*: and those who have writ books for the preservation of honesty, have not preserved themselves from corruption.

Now

Now Secondly, for *Mercy*, it makes a more ſpecial claim to our favour, becauſe we ſtand ſo much in need of it every day, if not from other men, yet from God. And it is to be obſerved that the Prophet, though juſtice is to be loved, yet doth not ſay *Love juſtice*, but *Love mercy*; becauſe he would recommend it to our deareſt affections. For there are more *juſt men*, then there are *mercifull* in the world; it being eaſier to give men their *own*, then to beſtow upon them what is *ours*. Oh, to part with this earth, this Idol of Gold and Silver, is a hard leſſon: to give to him that asks, to do good to him that doth evil to us, is an harſh ſaying. But remember what *Zacheus* ſaith, *Luk.* 19. 8. *Not only I reſtore four fold to him whom I have wronged; but half of my goods I give to the poor.* Of ſuch a charitable diſpoſition muſt you be, if you hope to go to heaven, and care no more for riches then do your little children. You muſt not make hard bargains with poor men, nor think every penny overplus too much for them. You muſt uſe

*Secondly*, Let mercy be joyned with juſtice.

ſometimes to give more then you have agreed for; that ſo you may be ready and diſpoſed to do an act of charity when the poor call for it. I know it hath been frequently pleaded, that the times are hard and dangerous, and that mens eſtates are much impoveriſhed. But then (1) they are harder you may be ſure with the poor, if they be hard with you who are rich. If they make you cry, they make them groan. If they pinch your purſe, then they ſqueeze and drain their very houſes. And (2) mercifulneſs is the way to make them better. When they have made us better and become more charitable, then they themſelves will grow better, & become more peaceable. *He that hath a bountifull eye ſhall be bleſſed. He that hath mercy upon the poor, happy is he,* Prov. 14. 21. Prov. 22. 9. And (3) the worſe and more dangerous they are, the leſs we ſhould be in love with riches, and the more we ſhould give away to them that need. For it is likely we cannot keep them, or by giving ſome away we may ſecure the reſt. As men that are afraid their goods will be

be loſt by ſtorms at Sea, give ſo much in the hundred to aſſure them; ſo ſhould we aſſure our goods and eſtates with God when the times are tempeſtuous, by giving him a large ſumm for his uſes. A wiſer man then any of us makes the badneſs of the times an argument unto charity, howſoever now it is a motive to many to ſhut their hands. *Give a portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight, for thou knoweſt not what evill ſhall be upon the earth.* Eccleſ. 11. 2. His meaning is, the time may come when thy treaſure ſhall be taken from thee, and how much better is it to part with them voluntarily? Thou canſt not tell how much danger all thou haſt will be in: and therefore it is wiſdom to intruſt God with it, and give him ſomething in hand, that he may ſave the reſt. And (4.) if God do not ſave thy riches, yet he may wonderfully ſave thee. For he hath promiſed (*Pſal.* 41. 1, 2. 3.) to preſerve the merciful men in time of trouble and ſickneſs. Or (5) if he take ſuch men away, it is when he intends to deſtroy a place, and then who would deſire

fire to live? *Isa.* 57. 1. If they be taken away from the evil to come, then death doth them a great deal of good, and God is very merciful to such merciful men, in not letting them see the desolation of their countrey. To all which add, that while we live, *we have no more then we do enjoy, and then we give away for Gods sake.* And there is no less of mercy in *forgiving* of men, then in *giving* to them, in passing by the evil they do to us, then in doing good to them; but lest this discourse should proceed to over great a length, I must leave you to judge how much we should *love* it by what hath been said of this.

And thirdly, humble walking with God be joyned with them both.

And then thirdly for *walking humbly* with God, let me only suggest these two things from the word *walk*, which I have not yet taken notice of. *First*, it signifies more then one single act, and engages us to a continued motion in the wayes of humility. Our demeanour towards God must be a *life* of lowlinesse, meekness and patience; a *course* of contentedness and sobriety, modesty and moderation; a constant

*series*

*ſeries* of ſuch actions as I have named. And if we think to come to heaven by taking a ſtep or two in this way, or by fierce running at ſometimes, we ſhall be but like to a traveller who ſits ſtill the moſt of his day, and thinks to come to his journeys end by ſome ſudden ſpurts toward night. To maintain a conſtant ſenſe of our dependance on God; a continual converſe with him: & to have a perpetual care in all things to pleaſe him, by conforming our wills to him; are things ſo neceſſary, that we are but *nominal* Chriſtians without them. And *ſecondly*, to *walk* humbly ſignifies more then an inward perſwaſion, and denotes ſomething outward that is to be ſeen by the world. God will not accept of that which people call a good heart, a pious reſolution and right meaning; but he will have us *walk* before all men in the way of his commandments, and publiquely appear in oppoſition to the wickedneſs that is in the world. If we think one thing and do another, the greater is the ſin, & the greater will be the condemnation, becauſe we know ſo well and do ſo ill. Not

These things must be done, and not only praised.

Not to mention any thing besides that may be included in the phrase; I beseech you put these things in practice. I have perswaded you enough, do but perswade your selves. All men commend justice, yet they do unjustly. Vertue hath every ones good word, though they live ungodlily. The proud man commends humility; and the covetous man praises Charity; and the unrighteous man speaks for honesty. Men complement with godliness, and they court vertue, but none will have her. She is poor, and will not consent to their base desires; and so though they extoll her beauty, they will none of her. So in *Italy* they have a proverb among the husbandmen, *laudandos esse montes, sed à planitie non recedendum. Commend the mountains, but live in the vallies.* It is fine sweet air that breaths on the top of hills and affords a pleasant wholsome dwelling; but keep there where most profit dwells, and that is in the bottom. It is sad that men should extend such a proverb as far as heaven, and commend the holy hill of God,

and

and all the graces and pleaſures that ſtand on the top of it; but reſolve ſtill to dwell below, and love the things that are beneath, better then all thoſe that are above. Yea though it be a meer dunghill, they will embrace it, if it be but fat, and will yield them plenty of worldly increaſe. They like goodneſs when they conſider it alone; but when they conſider it with other things, they take their eaſe and profit to be much better. So *Sophocles* ſaid in that advice which too many follow,

——Τὸ μὲν
Δίκαι' ἐπαίνει, τῷ δὲ κερδαίνειν ἔχει.

*Praiſe righteouſneſs, but ſtick faſt to thy gain.* Let it have thy good word, but do as thou ſeeſt good for thy ſelf. But I beſeech him that readeth theſe things, that by what hath been ſaid, he would riſe above approbations and commendations of godlineſs, and heartily ſubject himſelf unto the power of it; or if he love a ſofter word, let him embrace it, and marry himſelf to it; let the match now be made up, if he be yet but a complementer in Religion,

Religion, and not really wedded to it.

They must not be divided from each other.

I will only add, that all thoſe three are ſo linked and chain'd together, that they are inſeparable, and we cannot take one but we muſt have all. He cannot *walk humbly* with God who obſerves not all the rules of *juſtice* and common honeſty, with *mercy* alſo towards men. God will give him no thanks that goes againſt his conſcience and known Laws to do him ſervice, (as they are pleaſed to ſtile it.) No, *Plato in Critone.* μήτε παῖδας, &c. Let neither thy children (ſaith *Plato*) or thy life, nor any thing elſe be deerer to thee then juſtice, that thou mayſt have wherewith to anſwer for thy ſelf when thou comeſt εἰς ἅιδε into the other world. Elſe we (ſay the Laws which he there introduces ſpeaking their part) ſhall be thy enemies, and more then we, ἡμέτεροι ἄδελφοι *our Brethren* will be againſt thee: the Laws in that world will not courteouſly receive and treat thee.

οἱ ἐν ἅιδε νόμοι οὐκ εὐμενῶς σε ὑποδέξονται.

And then on the other ſide, we cannot be *juſt* and mercifull to men, unleſs we walk *humbly* with *God*. Juſtice it ſelf

ſelf ſhould ſpring from a ſenſe that we are under a divine Law, and are ſubjects to the heavenly Soveraign. And true godlineſs is but a piece of juſtice toward God, as honeſt dealing in affairs of the world is juſtice toward men. We do a manifeſt wrong to God, and deal diſhoneſtly with him, if we detain from him ſolemn and conſtant worſhip of him. We are baſe cheaters & defrauders, when we let our worldly buſineſs, though never ſo juſtly managed, rob God of our beſt thoughts and affections. And what high-way robbers then and notorious felons are thoſe who ſuffer their ſports and pleaſures, if not their more beaſtly luſts to do violence to all religious duties? Many of this ſort are ſo highly injurious to God, that they not only ſteal all they can from godlineſs and piety, but they wound and ſtab it with the ſword of their tongues; and if they were able, would ſtrike it dead, as they oft-times leave it gaſping for life. And this they do with an high hand and great inſolency; as if thoſe who moſt humbly ſubmit themſelves to all Chriſts

Chriſts commands, and are moſt fearfull of doing any wrong to God, were to be eſteemed our greateſt enemies, and thoſe that ſhould ſuffer all wrong from men. That Noble Philoſopher I juſt now mentioned, hath a leſſon for them as well as for the former, if they will be ſo juſt either to God or themſelves as to learn it: *In my opinion* (ſaith he) *piety and holineſs about the ſervice and worſhip of God is one part of juſtice; and the other part of it is concerned in the ſerving of men.* Let no man therefore pride himſelf in this, that he is not lyable to the charge of any creature, when God hath ſo much to ſay againſt him for neglect of praying to him, reading his word, praiſing him for every good thing he receives, if not mocking at all theſe. And let this be eſteemed true excellency (which we ſhould have the fortitude to maintain in the worſt of times) *not to bluſh at Chriſtian vertues, nor to boaſt of moral ones.*

Plato in Euthyphrone, τοῦτο ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ ὦ Σώκρατες, τὸ μέρος τῆ δικαιοσύνης εἶναι εὐσεβές τε καὶ ὅσιον, τὸ περὶ τὴν τῶν θεῶν θεραπείαν, &c.

3. And when we have done what we can upon our ſelves and thoſe under us, then let us pray for others; eſpecially

eſpecially thoſe that rule us, that we may have juſt, mercifull and religious Governours. Our prayers will be the more acceptable for them, when we pray but for that which we do our ſelves in our own places; and their juſtice and goodneſs will be the more ſweet to us, when it is the fruit of our earneſt prayers. Let us beſeech therefore the great Lord and Governour of the world who rules the Nations in righteouſneſs and truth, that all thoſe who do or ſhall bear any part in the government of theſe Lands, may be ſuch as will take away no mans rights, defend our Laws, pitty the poor, and not exact great ſums meerly to ſupport their own greatneſs. Let us pray that thoſe may rule us who are ruled by their maker, that will do good even to enemies, walk humbly with their God, be poor in ſpirit, not given to the vanities and exceſſes of the world; that will ſympathize with a poor Nation in its poverty, pitty it miſeries; not prodigally waſt its treaſures: and ſuch as will love Religion, and make the worſhip of God reverent

Let us pray for others, and principally for our Rulers, that they may do theſe things.

verent and the practice of all Christian duties had in high esteem.

Such Rulers the Lord will love and bless: and both *Prince* and *people* will feel the blessing that is in them. For so the wisest King that ever was tells us, Prov. 25. 5. *That if the wicked be taken from before the King, his throne shall be established in righteousness.* And if it be so established, then *the King by judgement establisheth the Land*, Prov. 29. 4. *All the people rejoyce when the righteous are in authority; and by a man of understanding and knowledge the state of a land is prolonged*, Prov. 29. 2. 28. 2. That which the Bishop of *Elvas* said to the estates of *Portugal* after they had restored that family to the Crown which had long been excluded by the *Spaniard*, is the greatest commendation of a *Prince* to the peoples affection, next to true piety; *His Majesty* (said he) *doth not esteem those tributes lawfull which were paid in tears; and he will not reign over your goods, nor over your heads, nor over your priviledges, but over your hearts.* He that by such a government as this doth seat himself

See also *Prov.* 28. 15, 16. *Prov.* 29. 14. *Prov.* 20. 28. *Amos* 5. 14, 15.

himself in the affection of God and his people: *his throne shall be established for ever, and his children are blessed after him*, Prov. 29. 14. 20. 7, 8. I will conclude this with the words of the same wise *King*, which concern every man of us: *He that followeth after righteousness and mercy, findeth life, righteousness and honour*, ch 21. 21. *By humility and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life*, Pro. 22. 4.

And when God hath heard these prayers, may we be so wise and happy as to chuse such *Representatives* in future times, as consist of persons *just* and righteous, *mercifull* and tender of all mens interests and concernments; and that *walk with God*, not living in any sin; and that *walk humbly* with him, not being puft up with a conceit of their own godliness: That are neither ungodly themselves, nor call all others ungodly who are not of their mind; That love not those who are bad; nor scorn any that are good; And in brief, that are not swoln with a belief of their own excellencies, nor grown heady and proud in opinions;

but men of a ſober Religion toward God, joyned with juſtice and charity toward man.

The *ſixth* Obſervation.

I Shall not exerciſe the Readers patience any longer about theſe matters, when I have but briefly opened the *ſixth* obſervation which naturally arriſes from the diſcourſe of the Prophet, viz. *That theſe things* [to do juſtly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God] *were alwayes more valued by God then Sacrifices, or any other bodily (though coſtly) ſervices.* It is the very intent of the man of God in this place to diſparage all outward worſhip though of Gods own appointment (and much more all their own deviſed ſervices) if it were not joyned with true purity of heart and piety of life. For there is nothing reaches the ſoul but theſe things that I have been treating of; nothing but theſe conform us unto *God*, who is a pure ſpirit: nothing is everlaſting and of an immortal nature but this image of God; and therefore this he would work in us that we may

may be bleſſed. But I need not proceed in this manner to give you the *reaſon* of it, you will preſently conclude the truth of the obſervation if I do but ſhew you *firſt* that theſe are the things which God always required above all the other: and *ſecondly* that all the other things did tend to the advancement of theſe. You may well expect I ſhould take this method, for your own ſouls will bid you enquire, why God did appoint ſacrifices, circumciſion, abundance of waſhings, and other ceremonies, if he was not mightily pleaſed with them.

Two things to be proved.

Therefore *firſt* I ſhall demonſtrate that God was not pleaſed with ſacrifices and things of that nature, ſeparated from juſtice, mercy and godlineſs: but that rather they were an abomination to him, and like the ſtinking carkaſs without the ſoul, when ſo ſeparated.

1. Sacrifices not ſo pleaſing as holineſs.

1. Look into the times before the *law*, & you ſhall ſee that there is no body commended for offering ſacrifices, or for loving any of theſe outward ſhadows, but only for theſe ſubſtantial

Proved from the times before the Law.

vertues which my Text ſpeaks of. It is ſaid of *Enoch, that he walked with God. and that God took him*, Gen. 5. 22, 24 but it is not ſaid that he was very liberall in ſlaying of beaſts, and that he aſcended to heaven in the ſmoak of ſacrifices. And it is ſaid of *Noah, that he was a juſt man and perfect in his generations, and one that walked with God*, Gen. 6. 9. but nothing is there ſaid where he is commended of building Altars, and making great ſtore of oblations to God. Though they did theſe things, and it is recorded of them that they did them: yet their character is not fetcht from ſuch things, nor do you read that God commends them upon their account. And ſo of *Abraham*, it is ſaid that he left his own countrey and believed God: and this ſaith the Apoſtle, was accounted to him for righteouſneſs. His high thoughts of God, his ſubmiſſion to him, his dependance on him, his forſaking all for him, his truſting of life and every thing he had in his hands: his obeying God, and following of him whitherſovever he would lead him: and in ſhort his abſolute

ute reſignation of himſelf, child, and all things elſe to Gods will: Theſe were the acts for which God accounted him his friend. But we do not read that God or the Apoſtle commend him for being circumciſed: no, *circumciſion was but the ſeal of the righteouſneſs of that faith which he had in uncircumciſion*, Rom. 4. 11. *i. e.* It did but teſtifie to him that his faith was good and ſound, becauſe God hereby took him into a covenant with himſelf: or, it was that mark and outward token whereby God did aſſure him of his acceptance into a covenant of great bleſſings for himſelf and ſeed, becauſe he had believed on him, and was righteous before him.

And from the times when the Law was given.

2. And not to proceed any further to others that ſucceeded preſently after him, but to look to the time of the Law: You may obſerve that the *ten commandments* were given by God before he gave any of the other Laws, *Exod.* 20. And likewiſe you may take notice of the ordinary ſtyle of *Moſes* when he ſpeaks of theſe things, which runs thus; Theſe are the *Command-*

*ments, the Statutes and the judgements*, Deut. 6. 1. or *keep his Commandments, his Statutes and judgements*, Deut. 30. 14. the like to which you may read, *Mal.* 4. 4. In all which places, and many other, *Commandments* are put first, which word comprehends the moral and everlasting precepts: and then follows *Statutes*, which denotes the Ordinances and institutions about Gods Worship; and after that *Judgements*, which signifies the Laws about matters of civil right, both which were alterable and not eternal. Yea the whole book of *Deuteronomy* (or the *second Law* as the word signifies) seems to be added after the other, to teach them that it was obedience to his voice in all things that God did most regard. And therefore *NaZianZen* reckoning up the priviledges of the Jews, saith that they had διπλῆν νομοθεσίαν, a double giving of the Law, *Orat.* 13. one ἐν γράμμασι in the Letter, the other ἐν πνεύματι in the Spirit. Which may be interpreted of that in mount *Sinai*, and of the other in the plains of *Jordan*.

3. And

3. And ſo after the Law was given, all the people of God underſtood that the things chiefly intended by him, were their inward mortification, their purity and integrity of ſoul: a ſpiritual worſhip, and a life of temperance, ſobriety, juſtice, mercy, humility and all other vertues. To this there are a multitude of places in holy Writ that will teſtifie and bear witneſs. *Hath the Lord as great pleaſure* (*ſaith* Samuel) *in burnt offerings and ſacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better then ſacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of ramms. For rebellion is as the ſin of witchcraft, and ſtubborneſs is as iniquity and idolatry*, 1 Sam. 15. 22, 23. *Saul* thought that God was delighted, if they feaſted him with a multitude of ſacrifices, and that nothing diſtaſted him if they had a care not to entertain *Idols* with the good chear at the Altar: and therefore *Samuel* tells him that God took the greateſt pleaſure in an hearty obedience to his commands, which was better then all the outward worſhip that he had appointed; and that rebellion againſt

And from the ſucceeding Ages.

*Samuel* a witneſs of it.

against Gods commands, was as bad as Idolatry and worshipping of stocks and stones. From the Prophet *Samuel* let us go to *Asaph*, who lived not long after, and he tells us, *Psal.* 50. 7, 8, 9, *&c.* that God did not hunger after the flesh of beasts and foul, nor thirst after the blood of Bulls and Goats: nor did he fall out with them for the neglect of this kind of service; but that which he required of them was to pray to him, and praise him, and perform all their vows promises to him, which was the best of offerings, *ver.* 14, 15. And that which he reproves and chides them for, was that they hated instruction, and made nothing of all his commands for the regulating of their words, desires and actions, *ver.* 16, 17, 18, *&c.* He asks them how they dare be so impudent as to pretend be in covenant with him (though they brought him never so many fat sacrifices) seeing they could not indure any of his counsels, but were unjust, unclean, lyers, swearers, slanderers and backbiters. As long as their evil affections and desires were

And *Asaph.*

unmor-

*unmortified*, he cared not for the *death* of ſo many of his creatures. And ſo you may read the ſenſe of *David* in the next Pſalm, Pſal. 51.15,16,17. *O Lord open my lips, and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe. For thou deſireſt not ſacrifice, elſe would I give it: thou delighteſt not in burnt-offerings. The Sacrifices of God, are a broken ſpirit; a broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not deſpiſe.* There were no Sacrifices indeed appointed for murder and adultery (to which he hath a particular reſpect) but they made a man obnoxious to death by *Moſes* his Law; Yet he ſaith in General, that God did not *delight in burnt-offerings*, and ſo his words may be extended farther than that one caſe of his. That which pleaſed God was holy praiſes, and the ſacrifices of a broken heart and contrite ſpirit. There may be an alluſion to the ceremonial worſhip in the words *broken* & *contrite*; the former of which may refer to the ſacrifice of beaſts, the latter to the perfume that was put before the teſtimony of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, *Exo.* 30.35,36. And the

And *David.*

the words may ſignifie as if he had ſaid, that brokenneſs of heart, and an holy ſhivering of the ſpirit in pieces, ſo that it ſhall never be ſet together in the ſame frame wherein it was before, is far better then the cutting and chopping of the fleſh of beaſts in pieces. And as ſpices when they are beaten, ſmell the ſweeteſt; ſo when your hearts are thus bruiſed and laid in their own duſt by ſincere contrition, it is a more grateful perfume to me then the *beaten ſpices* which were called moſt holy. If you look likewiſe into *Pſal.* 69. 30, 31. You ſhall find that to *praiſe God with a ſong, and magnifie him with thanksgiving, pleaſe the Lord better then an Ox, or Bullock that hath horns and hoofs.* From him paſs to *Solomon* his ſon, who is of the ſame judgement; for he ſaith expreſly, *That to do juſtice and judgement is more acceptable to the Lord then Sacrifice.* Prov. 21. 3. *Yea that the ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, eſpecially when he bringeth it with a wicked mind,* v. 27. And therefore in *Eccleſ.* 5. 1. he bids

And *Solomon.*

us

us *be more ready to hear* (*i. e.* to obey) *then to offer the ſacrifices of fools.* A fool is one that hath a body without a ſoul: and ſuch a carkaſs of religion are all ſacrifices without obedience: A meer skin and husk of devotion, which God can no more be pleaſed with, then we are with the gifts of a fool, who knows not what he doth. If from thence you paſs to the Prophet *Iſaiah*, he ſpeaks ſo fully to my purpoſe in the firſt chapter from the eleventh verſe to the twenty-firſt that I need not gloſs upon his words. And *chap.* 63. 1, 2, 3. the Lord tells that people who boaſted ſo much that they had provided him with an houſe, and furniſhed his table continually with ſacrifices, I need no houſe, nor am I beholden to you for a dwelling; for the heavens and the earth are mine. And I tell you there is no man loves me like to him that is poor in Spirit, humble and obedient to my word. Though you think that you pleaſe me mightily by the large proviſion you make at my houſe: believe it, without this contrition, poverty and holy trembling at my commands,

And all the Prophets.

mands, he that kills a whole Ox is so far from doing me any service, that it is as bad as an act of murder: (because he is an hypocrite and a base flatterer) And you may as well bring a dog or a pig to me (which was forbidden by the Law to be offered) as a lamb: Swines blood (which was the most detestable creature among them) is as good meat to me as the very best of your oblations: And you may as well fall down before an Idol and bless, as offer to me any incense. For indeed they made God but a great Idol, that could not see, nor hear their words and actions, much less their hearts and thoughts; and that would be pleased with any thing, and let them use him as they list. In the Prophet *Jeremiah* also the Lord complains that they had not hearkned to his words, nor to his law, but rejected it, 6. 19. and lest they should return to this exprobration, that they had been very obedient in offering of sacrifices, he saith, v. 20. *To what purpose cometh there to me incense from* Sheba, *and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt*

*burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your ſacrifices ſweet unto me:* Which is as if he ſhould have ſaid; Though you are at great coſt and charges about this outward worſhip, yet theſe are not the things that I ſo much expect: though you fetch me perfumes from forreign places, yet there are things nearer hand that are far more ſweet unto me. And he deals more plainly with them, *chap.* 7. 21, 22, 23. &c. ſaying, *put your burnt offerings to your ſacrifices, and eat fleſh,* &c. The *burnt offerings* you know were to be wholly conſumed in the fire, and the people were to have none of them; but of their *peace-offerings* or ſacrifices of praiſe they did eat: Now ſaith God, Take all if you will for me; I care not for your burnt offerings: you may eat them your ſelves as you do the reſt, ſeeing you ſo little regard my other commands. Never think to flatter me with theſe, for I can be content if you feaſt upon them your ſelves. I am not ſo greedy of yourf ar ſacrifices as you imagine: no, it was not about them that I ſpake with your fathers

thers when they came out of *Ægypt*: but this was the thing that I commanded them, that they ſhould obey my voice in all things. But did not they ask leave of *Pharaoh* (may ſome ſay) to go and offer Sacrifices in the wilderneſs? and did not God give them a Law about them? Yes, He did ſpeak to them indeed about thoſe things, but they were to be done in conjunction with better obedience: and comparatively with the other things, he did not command them. It was never intended that theſe ſhould be their righteouſneſs, and the things that they ſhould above all others perform: but *obedience* was the chief thing even in theſe that God reſpected. For ſo the words of *Jeremiah* may be underſtood, I did not command your fathers meerly concerning burn-offerings and ſacrifices, but the thing I aimed at, even in the appointing of them, was that they ſhould be obedient to my voice. To all this you may add that famous place cited by our Saviour *Hoſ. 6. 6. I deſired mercy and not ſacrifice, and the knowledge of God, more then*

*then burnt offerings.* I do not remember that the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeaks any thing of this matter: which might be perhaps, becauſe he wrote in the land of their Captivity, where ſacrifices were not offered. But leſt thoſe of the captivity ſhould think as their fore-fathers had done, that their ſacrifices were the things that he moſt delighted in: and that therefore he brought them from *Babylon* that they might offer them to him: He tells them, *Iſa.* 43. 23, 24. that they had not brought him any Sacrifices, nor honoured him with any offerings ſince they came to Babylon, and yet he would deliver them, which was a ſign that thoſe were not the things which he ſtood ſo much upon. No, inſtead of loading and wearying him with their Sacrifices (as their anceſtors had done) they had rather made him ſerve with their ſins, and wearied him with their iniquities; So that it was only for his own names ſake that he blotted out their tranſgreſſions, and did not remember their ſins, *v.* 25. And to conclude, an honeſt

Scribe in our Saviours time acknowledges the truth of all that I have ſaid, when he makes this reply to one of our Lords anſwers, *There is one God, and there is none other but he. And to love him with all the heart & with all the unaerſtanding, & with all the ſoul & with all the ſtrength, and to love his neighbour as himſelf; is more then all whole burnt offerings and ſacrifices*, Mark. 12, 32, 33. Where we have a full confirmation of the words in my text and of that alſo which was ſaid a little before, that theſe duties contained in the ten commandments, are the *firſt and chiefeſt* of all. For the Queſtion of this Scribe is, *which is the firſt commandment of all?* and our Saviour doth not ſay, to offer Sacrifices, which is neither *firſt* nor *ſecond* neither: But to love God he ſaith, is the prime and chiefeſt of all, and next to that is the love of our neighbour. I might add the ſenſe of ſober heathens, who thought that no ſacrifice would pleaſe God, but the oblation of a devout ſoul to him; and who looked upon theſe burnt offerings but as a needleſs butchery, as πυρὸς τροφὴν the food of the fire,

*V. Hierod. & Porphyr. περὶ ἀπ. χ. Plato Alcibiad. 2. Euſeb. 13. præp. Evang. C. 3.*

fire, and nouriſhment of the flame: but then I ſhould too much exceed the juſt bounds of this diſcourſe, conſidering alſo that there remains ſomething due to that great enquiry, which is, For what end were they and ſuch like things appointed by God, if they were not very pleaſing to him?

Sacrifices tended to promore toward holineſs.

2. THE truth is, thoſe heathens did commonly ſtretch this notion ſo far, as to condemn all ſacrifices; * ſome of them out of Ignorance of their true uſe, and others out of falſe principles which they had imbibed; and therefore (waving other ends, and keeping only to the purpoſe of my text) I laid down this as a *Second* truth to be proved, that *Sacrifices and ſuch like outward ſervices, did tend to keep men from ſin, and to advance juſtice, charity and piety.*

* *V. Euſeb. L. 4. Præpar. Evang. cap. 10. & 14.*

1. And firſt it ſeems to me as though there was the very ſpirit and reaſon of theſe three things in the threefold ſacrifices that were appointed. Their *ſin-offerings* which were to re-

concile withall, may be looked upon as a piece of *Justice*, and to be given by way of satisfaction unto God for the offences and wrongs done unto him. And the *peace-offerings*, as a piece of love and gratitude to God the author of all *Mercies*: and as a peice of charity and kindness to the poor, who in many cases were partakers of them. And then their whole *burnt-offerings* were tokens of their obedience, and *humble* acknowledgements that he was their great *Landlord* of whom they held the land of *Canaan*, and from whom they received whatsoever they did enjoy.

2. And so *Secondly* their Sacrifices taught them to consider that they should consecrate and offer themselves unto him, seeing that *they* were his, no less then their sheep or calves which they brought to his Altar. These sacrifices being their *tribute* which they paid to their supream Lord, did express that they were tyed to him in any *services* that he would require of them. They could not think that he would be pleased with an

an *Ox*, more then with a *man*, and that he would hold them excuſed if they rebelled againſt *him*, to whom they made theſe conſtant acknowledgments. They did not hereby pay their debts, but confeſs that they were indebted: They were not diſcharged by theſe from all obligations, but teſtified a ſenſe that they and all theirs were engaged to him.

3. And *Thirdly*, they promoted true holineſs as they ſhewed the hatefulneſs of ſin, and the guilt which it brought upon thoſe that did commit it. For what need was there that theſe poor creatures ſhould ſuffer for their faults, if God was not much offended by their diſobedience? The cries and ſtruglings of the beaſts might put them in mind what neceſſity ſin brought upon them of ſuffering, and how cruelly it would uſe thoſe who continued in it. And it would be eaſie to ſhew, that there was no puniſhment threatned for the breach of any of the *ten commandments*, whether *ſtoning*, or *ſtrangulation*, or *cutting of the throat*, or *burning* (for there were

but these *four*) but it was represented in the death of these beasts, which were thrown on the pavement, tyed about the throat, slain and burned either in whole or in part upon the Altar.

4 And *fourthly* these Sacrifices and all other outward ceremonies might well teach them how far they ought to keep from all inward difilements, who were to be so remote from all fleshly pollutions. They that were under such a constant discipline of God, and taught by such holy men, could not whithout a strange neglect be so sottishly stupid as to imagine that God took no care of the *soul*, who would have the *body* so clean and pure. If a beast must not have any blemish in it, nor the man that offered it any legal uncleaness upon him: he might easily think that God expected his mind should be holy, and not in a worse condition then his beast or his body. If they were to wash themselves and their sacrifices, then the soul sure was not to be dirty and impure. If they were to be seperated from

from all unclean persons, then much more from bad company. And if they might not so much as eat with a Gentile, then much less might they partake with them in their sins and impieties. I know not what truth there is in the observation of *Eulogius*; but he wonders why there being so many clean creatures allowed by God to be eaten in the Law, there were only five, (*viz.* a Goat, a Sheep, an Ox, a Turtle and a Pigeon) which were used in sacrifices; unless it had an ænigmatical and figurative meaning, to denote our *five senses*, which we are to purifie and cleanse, that we may adhere to God, and be fit to draw near unto him.

*Apud Photium in Bibl. pag. 887.*

5. And therefore *fifthly* we may look upon the law of ceremonies as an hedge to the Law of moral precepts, or the *ten commandments*. Some things as *Aristotle* well observes, are good in themselves and to be beloved καθ' αὐτὰ for their own sakes, and others are good and lovely διὰ τοῦτα for the sake of the former; as they are either ποιητικὰ τούτων effective and operative of them,

פ"נ החודה

*L. 1 Ethic.*

or φυλακτικά πως in ſome ſort a preſervative and guard to them; or as they are τῶν ἐναντίων κωλυτικὰ hindrances of their contraries, and forbid that which would deſtroy them. Now though the things that we are ſpeaking of were not good in themſelves, nor had any proper worth in them, as *juſtice*, *mercy*, and *humility* have: yet they were of this latter ſort of goods, and ſerved to maintain theſe greater things in their ſacredneſs, and to prohibit them from infringing any of the rights belonging unto them. God kept the Iſraelites at a great diſtance from violating theſe commands, by making them obſervant of leſſer injunctions. Their fear of theſe meaner offences was intended as a guard and ſecurity to the greater ſanctions and commands. As a man that dare not leap over an hedge into our paſture, will not venture one would think to climb over the wall into our garden: ſo he that durſt not break through and tranſgreſs the bounds of theſe outward precepts; it was to be preſumed would never be ſo bold as to tread under feet and contemn

temn the more divine Laws. God intended mainly to preſerve the holineſs of the *moral* laws and *ſpiritual* precepts: and ſo he ſet the *ceremonial* as a thornie fence about them, to keep them from being broken. Their not eating of blood muſt needs make them to have a natural abhorrence of murder (*Gen.* 9.4,5.) and their not marrying within ſuch degrees of conſanguinity, was an exerciſe of their *chaſtity*, and a great ſecurity againſt adultery and ſuch like wickedneſs. Their taking no uſe of their *poor* Brethren, and leaving them the corners of the fields when they reaped, *&c.* was a means to make them *not to covet* nor be greedy of the world. Their obſerving of ſo many daies in memory of Gods mercies, muſt needs teach them to have the *Sabbath* in great reverence, which was in memory of the creation of the world, and their deliverance out of *Ægypt*. Seeing they muſt break down ſo many mounds and banks as were câſt up about the eternal Law: it might reaſonably be ſuppoſed that they would never attempt to deſtroy

ſtroy it, at leaſt not as long as they kept theſe entire.

6. And in particular theſe things kept them from *Idolatry*, which was the higheſt contempt of God that could be. They were διατεῖχισμα μίσους τοῦ καὶ εἰδώλων (as *Nazianzen* ſaith of the whole Law) a *wall ſet up between God and Idols*, to keep them from running unto ſtrange worſhip: A partition which they muſt break down before they and the Gods of the heathens could meet together. And this *Maimon* doth conceive to be the reaſon of thoſe precepts which carry not their reaſon in themſelves: that God might make them abhor to participate in the Religion of the nations that were about them. For he well obſerves, that God commands them ſuch things as were quite contrary to their practice: ſo that what the heathens loved, that they were to abominate: and what they reverenced, the Jews were to have for daily uſe; and they were not ſo much as to worſhip toward the ſame quarter of heaven; but whereas

Orat. 42.

whereas the world generally had their holy place in the East, God placed his sanctuary in the West. But it is not his observation alone; for *Justin Martyr* long before in his disputation with the *Jew*, saith that the Israelites making a golden calf and offering sacrifice to it after the manner of *Ægypt*, God did accommodate himself to them, and commanded them to offer him sacrifices, that so they might not give away his worship unto Idols. And more plainly in his answers *ad Orthodoxos* (if that book be his) he saith that the Egyptians taking all living creatures (except a Swine) to have something of Divinity in them: God distinguished between the clean and unclean, and permitted the one to be offered in sacrifice, but the other he forbad to be so much as eaten; By both shewing that they were unworthy of the honour or name of gods, which might either be slain and eaten, or else were to be reputed of as unclean.

*Dialog. cum Tryph.*

*Respons. 35. ad Orthod.*

And *Theodoret* asserts it still more particularly, that the *Ægyptians* worshipping

*L. 7. de curat. Græc. affect.*

ſhipping a *Goat* and a *Sheep*, as well as a *Calf* or *Heifer*: and likewiſe holding the *Turtle* and *Pigeon* among the birds in greateſt veneration; God commanded the *Iſraelites* to ſacrifice theſe rather then any other, that ſo they might learn how vile the Religion of thoſe people was, whoſe gods were continually ſlain and eaten by them. And for this cauſe alſo it was (as he thinks) that God would not let them eat Swines fleſh, becauſe the *Ægyptians* τῶν ἄλλων ὡς θεῶν ἀπεχόμενοι abſtaining from the reſt as gods, did think it lawfull to eat of this creature only. But if it ſhould be thought that the *Ægyptians* did not worſhip a *Goat*, as it is certain they did a *Cow*, yet the Jews confeſs that the *Zabii* or *Sabæans* who were their near neighbours, did give divine honour to it, and againſt their infection they were no leſs to receive an Antidote then againſt the other. And this perhaps may be the reaſon why God loaded them with ſuch a world of ceremonies, that they might be ſo conſtantly imployed, as not to have time to think of adding any

any other devices of their own or others to his ſervice, having enough to do already. Only his infinite Wiſdom made theſe things ſerve to teach them higher duties, and to be ſhadows alſo of moſt glorious things to come, which I am not now to treat of.

7. But *ſeventhly*, as they put them in mind to conſecrate themſelves to God, ſo they remembred them to give him the very beſt, and the ſecrets of their ſouls. For it is well obſerved by *Cyril Alex.* that though God ſuffered them to offer ſacrifices as other Nations did, yet not after their manner, but ſo artificially and skilfully ordered, that (as I juſt now ſaid) they did νοητὰς λατρείας ὠδίνειν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς τὸν μόρφωσιν travel with the form of a ſpiritual and intellectual worſhip in their womb, of which they are now at laſt delivered. Their whole *burnt offerings* which aſcended intirely to heaven, and were to be choſen out of the beſt of their beaſts, fruits or liquors, might well carry along with them the chiefeſt of their thoughts and affections, yea their whole ſouls toward God, in

L. 9. *Contra Julianum.*

in whose service they were to spend themselves. And when they sacrificed *peace offerings*, they were to give to God the *kidneyes* or *reins*, which are the seat of carnal pleasure; and the *heart* (as some think) which is the fountain of all living motions, and the seat (in the ancient language) of the thoughts; and then the *blood* of the beast, which might well teach them to offer even their lives to him (who gave life to them) as well as all other things which were most dear in their eyes.

8. To which it may be added, that the sacrifices could not be accepted, unless the *person* as well as the beast which he brought were clean and holy. So that the offering did not make him good, but supposed him to be so already. *Plutarch* gives us to understand how exact the *Ægyptians* were about the red Cow which they had decreed was to be offered to *Typhon*, when he sayes that if there were but one hair black or white, she was judged to be ἄθυτον unlawfull to be offered in sacrifice. But he tells us likewise

*L. de Isid. & Osir.*

(in

(in the same place) that the person who brought it was to be sound and in a good state of health; for they thought that that being which is most pure, undefiled and without blemish, ought not to be served οὐκ σώμασι, οὐκ ψυχαῖς ὑπολίοις καὶ νοσώδεσι, with bodies or souls that were full of putrifying sores or diseases. You cannot think that the Jews were no less intelligent then these heathen; especially since God required of the man that offered them, that he should be so far from greater pollutions, that he should not lie so much as under any ceremonial defilement. Or if there were any secret naughtiness lying in his heart while his outward actions were unblamable, yet the sacrifice of such a wicked man was an abomination to the Lord, who knows the heart, *Prov.* 15. 8. And therefore you may observe that after the Psalmist had said, *Psal* 51. 17. *The sacrifices of the Lord are a broken Spirit, &c.* and desired acceptance with God for him and his people, *ver.* 18. he adds, *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering,*

*ring*, &c. *ver.* 29. As if he had told us *first*, that a broken and contrite heart must go before, else no sacrifices could be accepted to do the soul good; and then *secondly*, that in the time of offering they must be accompanied with *righteousness*, *i.e.* the mans soul must be holy and devout, and have a good affection in it unto God.

9. And after this they could not be accepted but by the mediation of the Priest, which taught them *great humility*, even when they were at the best, and in the greatest purity of body and soul.

10. And again there were some sins for which no sacrifices would be admitted, nor no Priest could intercede; which both taught them humbly to wait on the mercy of God, that he would find out a sacrifice and a Priest to expiate them; and likewise to take great heed how they fell into those sins.

11. And the *sacrifices* themselves are to be considered as a part of their *civil righteousness*; for by the giving of these to God, and observing the rest of

*Moses*

*Moſes* his Laws they had a title to the Land of *Canaan*. If they kept themſelves from defilements, or brought theſe oblations, and obſerved the feaſts, and kept the outward part of the ten commandments, they were ſaved from being cut off by the Magiſtrate, or caſt out by God from the poſſeſſions that he had given them. But God did not intend that this ſhould make citizens of heaven, or give them a right to the celeſtiall inheritance; *Canaan* it ſelf being but a type of heaven, and theſe ritual obſervances but ſhadows of more heavenly performances, whereby they were to ſeek that better countrey.

12. And yet when they performed theſe acts with an holy heart, in obedience to Gods command, and as a part of his will: not relying on them, nor contenting themſelves with them alone: they might be accepted as a piece of diviner righteouſneſs, as *Iſaacs* offering his ſon was, meerly becauſe God required him ſo to do. For then they were converted to have ſomething of ſpirituality in them: and be-

came of another nature: Then he that calls himself the *righteous Lord*, and the *holy one of* Israel, stiles himself also by this name, *The Lord, whose fire is in* Zion, *and his furnace in Jerusalem*, Isa. 31. 9. Those divine Acts which render us acceptable in Gods sight might be imployed in these things as well as in others, that faith, obedience, resignation, humility, liberality, *&c.* which God requires, might be exercised in these observances, as well as in another matter; and for them (not meerly for the sacrifices, *&c.*) they were commended.

AND

AND now how well will all this pains be beſtowed, if every man who reads theſe things will never content himſelf, nor be at reſt without a ſtate of inward purity and conformity to the divine will, and a ſincere obedience to every part of that Law which our Lord hath given us! Do not I beſeech you cover your ſelves with the leaves of piety, nor ſhroud your ſelves under the empty ſhadows of Religion: but put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, bring forth the reall fruits of juſtice, mercy, and humble godlineſs; let the life of God poſſeſs your ſouls, and the divine ſpirit actuate and inform you as living members of his body. We have our *waſhings*, and our *ſacrifices*, and our *dayes* of reſt as well as the Jews had: let us have a care that we uſe them out of a ſenſe of that duty we owe to God, and as means to exerciſe and increaſe our graces; and not pride our ſelves as they did in outward performances, and an heartleſs ſanctity. If we glory meerly in

our *Baptiſm*, in our being of ſuch a party and perſwaſion, in going to our Churches, hearing of Sermons there, and repeating them at home, receiving of the Sacrament of Chriſts body and blood, praying, ſinging Pſalms, and offering praiſes: We do but mock God with outward ſhews, and bring him to an Idol as *Michal* did *Sauls* meſſengers inſtead of a man. Nay, it is a greater ſhame and more damning for us to miſtake ſo groſly, and to think to pleaſe God with ſuch trivial things as words and outward geſtures, when we know more then they did, and have *their* miſcarriages laid ſo plainly before us. If God did not only deſpiſe but hate the Jewiſh ſervice when not joyned with obedience to his eternal precepts, then much more will he loth all ungodly men now with all their worſhip which they bring him, though never ſo pompous and ceremonious. For their Religion was full of ſhadows, ceremonies and outward ſigns, but ours is a Religion of more ſimplicity, and therefore we can be the leſs tempted to formality. And beſides we being

ing eaſed of that burden, of that heavy yoke which lay upon their necks, the heartier obedience in other things may be more juſtly exacted of us, and expected from us. Let me conclude therefore with the words of the Apoſtle of us Gentiles, and *beſeech you by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God.* Rom. 12. 1, 2.

FINIS.